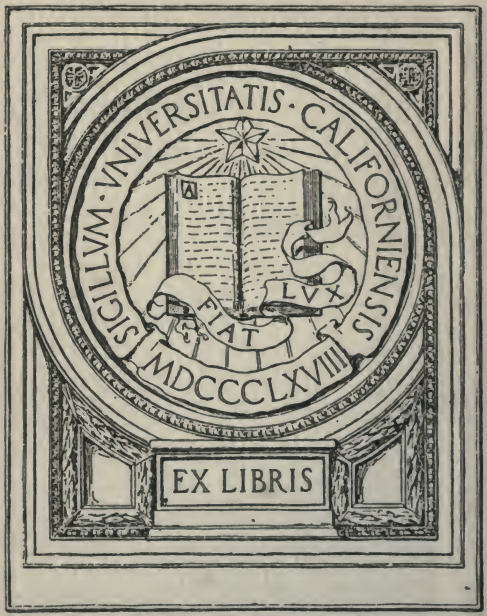
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PORTRAIT OF DEFOE.

Engraved by Vandergucht, after a painting by Taverner (?) prefixed to the first volume of the collected writings (1703).

Short Monographs on Great Writers

DANIEL DEFOE

BY

ALBINIA WHERRY
AUTHOR OF
"GREEK SCULPTURE WITH STORY AND SONG," ETC.

LONDON
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1910

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"To the Glorious Memory"

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1688. Joined William in his advance on London.
1692 (*about*). Became bankrupt. Fled to Bristol.
1695. Appointed accountant to the Commissioners of the Glass Duty.
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DANIEL DEFOE

EARLY LIFE

1661—1702

DANIEL DEFOE, first of journalists and prince of story-tellers, was a man of many and varied experiences, by turns theological student, rebel under arms, loyal volunteer, merchant, manufacturer, and bankrupt; but from first to last a scribbler, who wrote with amazing fluency and apparent conviction on every kind of subject.

In fiction his name is familiar as the author of two remarkable works, "The Strange Adventures of Robinson Crusoe," and "A Journal of the Plague Year," both of which stories, although founded on fact and purporting to be veracious narratives, owe their well-deserved success to the fertile brain and facile pen of their creator. Among the many readers who are acquainted with these "immortal works" comparatively few are aware that Defoe was also the author of many fictitious narratives of secondary interest, and that he may be regarded as the originator of the

Criminal Novel which still enjoys so much popularity. The actual number of Defoe's authentic works has been variously estimated by his different biographers. William Lee brings the list up to two hundred and fifty, adding twenty-four on his own responsibility. No complete collection of them exists in any library, public or private; the largest is in the possession of Mr. James Crossly of Manchester, who is also the owner of the only perfect copy of the "Review" purchased by him at Chalmers' sale, and of the "Compleat English Gentleman," which was printed but never wholly published. It would be interesting to know if the happy possessor of these rarities has himself mastered their contents, or whether he holds the same opinion as Lee, whose enthusiasm did not reach these heights, "for no one," he says, "would be so insane as to read all Defoe's two hundred and fifty odd works."

The details concerning the domestic life of this remarkable man are unusually scanty. He was twice married and had seven children, but in the absorbing preoccupation of his literary and political career had little leisure to bestow on his private affairs, which indeed suffered considerably from this neglect.

In a passage in the seventh volume of the "Review" (1711), the author states that his grandfather was a landowner at Elton, in Huntingdonshire, and the fact that the latter was owner of a pack of hounds, on which his huntsmen bestowed such names as Roundhead, Cavalier, Goring, and Waller, may perhaps be regarded as a proof

of royalist and aristocratic tendencies. But Defoe's father, a portionless younger son, with strong Dissenting proclivities, bred cattle and established himself in London as a butcher, calling himself merely James Foe; and it was not until 1703, when Daniel was over forty years of age (and had signed himself D. F. D. Foe and De-Foe), that he adopted the method of spelling his name now commonly in use.

Daniel Defoe was born in 1661, the date being fixed by his own statement in the preface to the "Protestant Monastery," published in 1727, that he was then in his sixty-seventh year. He was an infant when the Act of Uniformity caused the secession from the Established Church of two thousand conscientious ministers, and finally created, as a separate ecclesiastical element in the state, that Nonconformist body with which Defoe was intimately connected throughout his chequered career. In 1697 he published an Elegy on the death of James Foe's most intimate friend Dr. Samuel Annesley, who, according to a not very well attested tradition, was Daniel's father-in-law. This worthy man, although by conviction a Dissenter, was in practice among the most loyal of his Majesty's subjects; he refused to supply a horse to the rebel army and locked his church door in order that no thanksgiving service for a Cromwellian victory should be celebrated within its walls. It was by Annesley's advice that Daniel Defoe, at fourteen years of age, was sent to a Nonconformist Academy at Stoke Newington to be trained for the minis-

try; and in spite of the contempt with which the latter afterwards referred to the educational methods of this establishment, he appears to have obtained there not only a knowledge of the classics but also an unusual command of the English language. His familiarity with at least three modern languages may have been acquired later; but when taunted by Swift and Tutchin with being an illiterate fellow, Defoe retorted indignantly that "he had been in his time pretty well master of five languages."

The impetuous and adventurous youth could not be induced to adopt the profession for which he had been intended; to use his own words, "the ministry seemed to him at that time to be neither honourable, agreeable, nor profitable . . . the behaviour of the congregation to the ministers was often objectionable and unchristian . . . and the prizes of the ministry in London were generally given to strangers, eminent ministers called from all parts of England."

Yet the fervent religious zeal which inspired many of the Rev. Charles Morton's pupils to forsake their homes and follow their beloved master into voluntary exile stimulated young Defoe, with some of the more notable of his fellow-students, to join, in 1685, the rebel army of the Duke of Monmouth, then regarded as the champion of Protestantism. More fortunate than his friends, who were numbered among the victims of the Bloody Assize, Defoe, after narrowly escaping the same fate, was glad to conceal his military aspirations under the sober guise of a

tradesman; and he became a wholesale dealer in hosiery, with an occasional adventure in contraband goods, such as brandy, until the passing of James II and the coming of William of Orange.

It is not known for certain when Defoe made his first literary venture. He has been credited with the authorship of "Speculum Crapegownorum," issued in 1682, when he would have been twenty-one years of age; but as his earlier publications are unsigned, a treatise in verse with the title, "A New Discovery of an Old Intrigue, a Satire levelled at Treachery and Ambition" is the first of undisputed authenticity. This satire, with its vivid caricatures of persons of local celebrity, could only have enjoyed ephemeral reputation, though doubtless the cause of much rage and delight at the time of its appearance.

A subject of wider interest was now to engage his pen, and Defoe, who above all things was a politician, plunged enthusiastically into the controversy which was to occupy so important an influence on his future career.

The immediate or final cause which led to the expulsion of James II and the fall of the Stuart dynasty had been the Declaration of the first and second "Indulgence," wherein the King, desiring to promote the security of his own co-religionists, practically repealed, without the consent of Parliament, the Penal Laws against Roman Catholics and Nonconformists. So high-handed a proceeding on the part of a constitutional monarch was in itself an infringement of the privileges of

a free parliament, and was, moreover, intended only for the advantage of the members of the Catholic Church. A trumpet blast from Defoe soon made the grateful but bewildered Dissenters aware of their peril, for in a pamphlet entitled "A Letter containing some Reflections on His Majesty's Declaration for Liberty of Conscience," the author pointed out in forcible language the danger of arbitrary government and the illegality of repealing a law sanctioned by the representatives of the people. There seems no reason to doubt the authenticity of this tract, though issued without date, signature, name of printer or place of publication. The promulgation of a second Indulgence was followed by a protest on the part of the Archbishop of Canterbury and six bishops, who were imprisoned, tried, and acquitted amid universal rejoicing. A few weeks later King James II fled before his outraged subjects; the usurper, William of Orange, landed at Tor Bay (1688), and the following year William and Mary as joint sovereigns made a triumphal entry into the capital. Conspicuous then among the well-appointed troop of volunteer cavalry who formed their escort was Daniel Defoe, hosefactor, who in 1683 had become a liveryman of the city of London.

For some years after that event Defoe lived at Tooting, and was occupied chiefly in commercial enterprises; his too impetuous and sanguine temperament soon, however, leading him into difficulties. About 1692, after successive failures, he was obliged to fly from his creditors, and take

refuge at Bristol. For six days of each week the Sheriff's officer kept close watch for the defaulter, but on the seventh Defoe, gorgeously attired, was wont to emerge from his hiding-place, and was, therefore, called by the inhabitants the "Sunday Gentleman."

In spite of his failures he seems to have had the reputation of being a man of some capacity, for he received several offers of employment, one especially, as Commission Agent in Spain (1674), with handsome emoluments. Defoe, however, was devoted heart and soul to the Whig party, especially to King William, whom he regarded with reverence as the defender of England's safety both at home and abroad, and he was too much interested in the political affairs of his own country to accept any position, however lucrative, in a foreign land.

After the publication, in 1694, of "The Englishman's Choice and True Interest in the vigorous prosecution of the War against France serving King William and Queen Mary and acknowledging their right," Defoe entered into a new phase of his career. In 1695 an appointment under the Commissioners of the Glass Duty, which he held for five years, placed him in a sounder financial position; and in his favour be it related that he honourably discharged his obligations to his creditors. They had compounded with him for £5,000, and expected nothing further; but the following anecdote, recorded by one of his enemies, shows plainly the rectitude and strictly honourable business character of

the man who has been branded as spy, informer, turncoat, and traitor. "In the opening years of Queen Anne's reign a party of beaux in a coffee-house were discussing the character of Defoe and abusing him in no measured language. A man suddenly rose from the midst of them and spoke as follows: 'Come, gentlemen, let us do justice. I know this Defoe as well as any of you. I was one of his creditors, compounded with him, and discharged him fully. Years after he sent for me, although he was clearly discharged; he paid me all the remainder of the debt voluntarily and of his own accord, and he told me that in so far as God would enable him he meant to do the same with everybody.'"

Now that in the Daily Journals news flying on electric wires round the world immediately becomes the property of the gaping crowd, it is difficult to estimate the former importance of the political pamphlet as a means of spreading information and educating public opinion on controversial matters. The position of William with regard to his English subjects was always difficult, and one serious contention between them was on the necessity of maintaining a standing army in time of peace. When in 1697 the Treaty of Ryswick held forth fallacious promises of safety, the people clamoured for the disbandment of all regular troops. The following year Defoe issued his "Argument showing that a Standing Army with the consent of Parliament is not inconsistent with free Government."

He was thirty-eight years of age when he pub-

lished this masterpiece. "None of his subsequent tracts surpasses it as a piece of trenchant and persuasive reasoning . . . he wrote for a class for whom a prolonged intellectual operation, however comprehensive and complete, was distasteful . . . and for such an object there are no political tracts in the language that can compare with his."

In 1697 he had published "The Poor Man's Plea," written for the furtherance of some excellent reforms which had long engaged the attention of the joint sovereigns. Defoe's pamphlet in support of these measures dealt more especially with the corruption of the judges and the consequent frustration of the ends of justice. "The Parson," he says, "preaches a thundering sermon against drunkenness, and the Justice puts my poor neighbour in the stocks; and I am like to be much the better for either when I know that this same Parson and this same Justice were drunk together but the night before."

By a pamphlet written in 1698 against the practice of "Occasional Conformity," Defoe had embroiled himself with that Nonconformist party to which by early training and personal sympathy he always belonged. As Naaman the Syrian stipulated with the prophet that while in attendance on the king he should be permitted to bow down in the house of Rimmon, so the Dissenters since the Revolution had qualified themselves for public office by receiving the Sacrament according to the rites of the Established Church. No particular attention was attracted on either

side by these ingenious attempts to serve God and mammon, until a certain Lord Mayor, having attended in state the morning worship of the Anglican Church, made a ceremonial attendance at a Nonconformist Chapel on the afternoon of the same day.

That Defoe was right in his arguments against this falling away from the higher standard of Protestantism is incontestable; but, when a few years later he denounced the Queen Anne bill, brought forward by the Tories, prohibiting the practice of occasional conformity, calling it a Breach of Toleration and an Act of Persecution, it is not surprising that he was regarded as a turncoat and traitor by both parties. His position, however, was a logical one, perfectly comprehensible to an unprejudiced mind. He desired to purge the ranks of the Nonconformists from lax members, but was always in favour of toleration and impartial justice to all parties in the State. When quite a young man he had given offence to his connexion by refusing to join with them in praying for the success of the Turks against Vienna (1683). "Even if the Austrians were Papists, he could not," he said, "pray for the victory of the Infidel over Christians of any denomination."

The brief spell of tranquillity secured to Europe by the Peace of Ryswick, was brought to an abrupt termination by the death, in 1700, of the childless King of Spain, who bequeathed his large dominions in Europe and America to the Duke of Anjou, second grandson of Louis XIV.

The balance of power so laboriously established by William was thus jeopardized, and, before the French acceptance of the magnificent bequest was officially announced, Defoe had rushed into the arena with a tract entitled, "Two Great Questions considered. What the French King will do with respect to the Spanish Monarchy? What measures the English ought to take?" This was followed by another stirring appeal on the same subject, urging his countrymen to protect their interests if need be by the sword. But loyalty had grown cold, and the English people, always hard to move, turned a deaf ear to his warnings. The following year Defoe took up another line of argument, "The Danger to the Protestant Succession from the Present Prospect of a Religious War in Europe"; and with equal unsuccess endeavoured to influence the elections by a tract entitled, "Six Distinguishing Characteristics of a Parliament Man" (1700). In this last pamphlet he pointed out to the electors the absurdity of such trivial tests as the quarrel between the old and new East India Companies when the fate of Europe hung in the balance.

Curiously enough his next essay, a poem in doggerel verse, "The True Born Englishman" (1701), written in answer to a scurrilous pamphlet called "The Foreigners," in which William and his Dutch favourites were held up to ridicule and execration, aroused much greater interest, and, in spite of its unsparing satire, pleased the popular taste. Eighty thousand copies were, it is said, sold in the streets. Defoe's argument was "that

there was no such thing as a true born Englishman"; the English were a mongrel race inheriting the vices of divers nationalities. The opening lines of the poem have a familiar ring, though people in the habit of quoting them do not always remember where they are to be found.

Wherever God erects a house of prayer,
The Devil always builds a chapel there;
And 'twill be found upon examination
The latter has the largest congregation:
For ever since he first debauched the mind,
He made a perfect conquest of mankind.
With uniformity of service, he
Reigns with a general aristocracy.
* * * * *
Making a race uncertain and uneven,
Derived from all the races under Heaven.
The Romans first with Julius Caesar came,
Including all the nations of that name,
Gauls, Greeks, and Lombards, and, by computation
Auxiliaries or slaves of every nation.
With Hengist, Saxons; Danes with Sueno came
In search of plunder, not in search of fame.
Scots, Picts, and Irish from the Hibernian shore,
And conquering William brought the Normans o'er.
All these their barbarous offspring left behind,
The dregs of armies, they of all mankind;
Blended with Britons, who before were here,
Of whom the Welsh ha' blessed the character.
From this amphibious ill-born mob began
That vain ill-natured thing, a Englishman.
* * * * *
These are the heroes that despise the Dutch,
And rail at new-come foreigners so much,
Forgetting that themselves are all derived
From the most scoundrel race that ever lived;

A horrid crowd of rambling thieves and drones,
Who ransacked kingdoms and dispeopled towns,
The Pict and painted Briton, treacherous Scot,
By hunger, theft and rapine hither brought;
Norwegian pirates, buccaneering Danes,
Whose red-haired offspring everywhere remains,
Who, joined with Norman-French, compound the breed
From whence your true-born Englishmen proceed.

* * * * *

An Englishman is gentlest in command,
Obedience is a stranger in the land:
Hardly subjected to the magistrate,
For Englishmen do all subjection hate;
Humblest when rich, but peevish when they're poor,
And think whate'er they have they merit more.

* * * * *

Could but our ancestors retrieve the fate,
And see their offspring thus degenerate;
How we contend for birth and names unknown,
And build on their past actions, not our own;
They'd cancel records, and their tombs deface,
And openly disown the vile degenerate race:
For fame of families is all a cheat,
'Tis personal virtue only makes us great.

His last important pamphlet during the life of William was "Reasons against a War with France" (1701). Under this paradoxical title Defoe sought to disarm suspicion and gain a hearing with readers who were opposed to his military schemes; its meaning and object therefore only become apparent after careful perusal of the contents, wherein he urges that great profit would accrue from a war with Spain, and that the plundering of the West Indies would

compensate the losses to our commerce now suffered through the capture of our merchantmen by French privateers.

In after years it was his pride to avouch: "I have been trusted and esteemed and, much more than I deserved, valued by the best King England ever saw." It appears certain that this was no idle boast, and that he had enjoyed the King's confidence and his personal instructions, especially with regard to the tract on the "Succession" (1701). The object of this manifesto, viz., "That an attempt be made to prove the legitimacy of the descendants of Charles II and Lucy Walters," would, if established, have barred the succession of the Electress, Sophia of Hanover, whose Protestantism was by no means above suspicion. Defoe's efforts to stir up the sluggish ambitions of his countrymen were in vain; the Succession to Spain was the affair, they said, of Holland, not England; and Parliament refused to vote supplies. Then James II died, and the claim of his son to the English throne was officially recognized in France. At this unprovoked interference with their liberties, the latent patriotism of the people broke into flame, and a new parliament proved as ready for war as the most belligerent sovereign could desire. But "the great Immortal King" did not live to enjoy the sweets of his new popularity; the "little gentleman in black velvet," so fondly toasted by the Jacobites, did his work effectually, and William, having sustained fatal injuries through the stumbling of his horse over a mole-

heap on the 8th March, 1702, passed off the stage whence his rival, James II, had so recently been withdrawn.

One more important event of William's reign must not be passed over unrecorded. This was the presentation of the "Legion Memorial," a document of such portentous size that it was conveyed to the Houses of Parliament on the top of a hackney coach. Its object was that of supporting a Whig petition for the release of five loyal gentlemen of Kent who had been impeached and imprisoned by the Tory majority. Defoe (it has been said in female attire), at any rate well disguised, and protected by six gentlemen of quality, presented the petition to the House of Commons, and was feasted publicly, with the martyrs of the Cause, at the end of June, 1701, in Mercers' Hall.

TRIAL AND IMPRISONMENT

1702—1706

THE death of William was a crushing blow to Defoe's hopes of future advancement. His position was difficult, and those who blame his subsequent conduct should ask themselves searchingly how they would have acted under similar circumstances. While the King lived, his devoted adherent enjoyed an honourable and assured position, but during the reign of Queen Anne, when confusion and uncertainty, dishonesty and corruption, permeated all public and political life, Defoe, dependent for his livelihood on the patronage of party leaders, fell lamentably short of the higher standards of political morality.

His fall was a gradual one, for, when William died and all the world rushed to pay homage to the Stuart Queen, Defoe alone remained faithful to his deceased sovereign, and in a poem entitled "The Mock Mourners" (1702), he celebrated "The glorious Memory," a phrase which has passed into our language. In another poem, on "The Spanish Descent," he ridicules the failure of the first naval expedition of Queen Anne's reign.

The appearance in 1702 of what has been called the "truest, ablest, and most seasonable pamphlet" ever published, with the startling title, "The Shortest Way with Dissenters," brought upon him universal reprobation. In this extraordinary production he adopted, but without the same success, the ironical language so effectively employed by Swift. In the supposed person of an extreme High Churchman he rallies the Dissenters on their discontent and disloyalty, advocated in bloodthirsty language the advantage which martyrdom confers upon a cause, and broadly hints that a new Massacre of St. Bartholomew might be productive of excellent results. This brutal jest, if jesting it could be called, pleased no one. The High Church party were horrified at such bloodthirsty sentiments emanating from a supposed member of their body; and, if the Dissenters for whose profit it was intended were inclined to laugh, it was, according to the old nursery saying, on the wrong side of the mouth. The Queen's ministers issued a warrant for the detention of the anonymous author, whose real identity had long been an open secret; and this warrant contains the only extant description of this remarkable personage. "He is a middle-aged spare man about forty years old, of a brown complexion and dark-brown coloured hair, but wears a wig; a hooked nose, a sharp chin, grey eyes, and a large mole near his mouth; was born in London and was for years a hose-factor in Freeman's Yard, Cornhill, and now is owner of the brick and pantile works

near Tilbury Fort." It is a singular fact that no authentic portrait of Defoe is known. It is possible that even "portraits," such as the well-known engraving by Vandergucht, may be fancy likenesses built up from this description.

For some time Defoe, like an old fox in safe cover, defied the huntsmen; but, when printer and publisher fell into the hands of the law, he came honorably forward and gave himself up to justice. The punishment inflicted on him was a severe one. Not only was he heavily fined and sentenced to imprisonment in Newgate during the Queen's pleasure, but he was also condemned to stand for three days in the pillory. The last part of the sentence was carried into effect at the end of July, 1703; and, although his physical suffering must have been considerable, the disgrace became his triumph. The populace, with whom he was a temporary idol, gave him an ovation; his instrument of torture was wreathed with flowers; and, instead of the usual missiles of rotten eggs and decayed vegetables, sweet blossoms were showered upon him. While Defoe unjustly suffered the extreme rigour of the law, his "Hymn to the Pillory" (1703) was hawked about the streets, and thousands of copies were bought by the sympathizing crowd.

The bold utterances are as much to the credit of the writer as the abuses which he holds up to public scorn cast disgrace on the methods of Justice, civil and ecclesiastical, of his day:

DEFOE IN THE PILLORY.

A HYMN TO THE PILLORY

Hail hieroglyphic state machine,
Contrived to punish fancy in:
Men that are men in thee can feel no pain,
And all thy insignificants disdain.
Contempt, that false new word for shame,
Is, without crime, an empty name,
A shadow to abuse mankind,
But never frights the wise or well-fixed mind:
Virtue despises human scorn,
And scandals innocence adorn.

* * * * *

Thou art no shame to truth and honesty,
Nor is the character of such defaced by thee
Who suffer by oppresséd injury.

* * * * *

There would the famed Sacheverell stand
With trumpet of sedition in his hand,
Sounding the first crusado in the land.
He from a Church of England pulpit first
All his Dissenting brethren curst;
Doomed them to Satan for a prey,
And first found out the shortest way.

* * * * *

Tell them it was because he was too bold,
And told those truths which should not have been told,
Extol the justice of the land,
Who punish what they will not understand.
Tell them he stands exalted there
For speaking what we would not hear;
And yet he might have been secure
Had he said less or would he have said more.

Tell them that this is his reward,
And worse is yet for him prepared,

Because his foolish virtue was so nice
As not to sell his friends, according to his friends' advice.

And thus he's an example made,
To make men of their honesty afraid,
That for the time to come they may
More willingly their friends betray;
Tell them the men that placed him here
Are friends unto the times;
But at a loss to find his guilt,
They can't commit his crimes.

From his prison he issued a collection of his writings, to which was attached, by way of an introduction, a rhyming satire on himself called "More Reformation" (1703), and also the first numbers of a "Review of the Affairs of France," which, besides containing much solid information on foreign history and politics, not of France only but of the whole of Europe, was enlivened by a column entitled "Mercure Scandale or Advice from the Scandalous Club, a weekly journal of Nonsense, Impertinence, Vice and Debauchery." "The first number of this periodical publication (far superior to anything which had hitherto appeared) was printed on 19 February, 1704, repeated every Saturday and Tuesday until 1705, and after that three times a week until its termination in May, 1713." A copy from 19th February, 1704, to 23rd March, 1710, is in the British Museum.

While Defoe, in the pursuit of literature, was beguiling the weary hours of his captivity, changes were taking place at Court. Queen Anne's allegi-

ance to the High Church party was on the wane; and the great Duchess of Marlborough, who, although no longer reigning favourite, still exercised considerable influence, threw all her weight into the descending scale. In 1704 the Earl of Nottingham sent in his resignation, which, to his surprise and disgust, was immediately accepted; and Robert Harley, coming into office, sent a message to Defoe asking if he could be of any service to him. "Lord, that I may receive my sight," was the characteristic reply. Through the representations of Harley, Defoe was released from prison, and the Queen sent a sum of money to relieve the immediate necessities of his family, who, owing to the failure of the pantile works at Tilbury during the absence of their owner, were in great straits.

"From this time," says Defoe, "although at heart a Whig, I was constantly obliged to serve a Tory ministry," and he excuses himself for the apparent inconsistency by declaring that he was never a party man and that by furthering his country's best interests and not openly opposing his own side he committed no breach of faith.

One of his biographers very justly says: "The personal obligation to Harley which fettered Defoe's politics and clouded his popularity during the last years of Queen Anne's reign, fixed no stain on his character except in the dissimulation and slanders of his enemies."

With his usual perspicacity in divining events before they had actually taken place, Defoe in 1703 published a violent attack on the High

Church party, entitled "A Challenge of Peace to the whole Nation," together with a further statement of that unpopular recommendation that, while the Dissenters should of their own free will stand aloof from the Established test, they should not by law be forced to desist from the practice of Occasional Conformity.

From Bury St. Edmunds, "the Montpelier of England," whither he had gone to recruit after his long imprisonment, Defoe poured forth a series of pamphlets, of which the most notable, "Giving Alms no Charity," was an attack on a scheme for National Workshops proposed by Sir Henry Mackworth. In the "Review," which he refused to allow to become a party Organ, he held forth on the blessings of Peace, the importance of National Union and Political Adhesion. On this, and not on personal grounds, he professed to triumph over the fall of Nottingham, who he declared was an enemy to his country. The "Review," and a "Hymn to Victory" (1704), published separately, while celebrating the success of Marlborough's victorious arms, did not fail to divert some of the credit to the new Ministry.

Once more he shocked the nerves of the Dissenters by pointing out the wise policy of Louis XIV, who, in 1638, by revoking the Edict of Nantes, had rid his country of a community of injured malcontents; and again he protested against the iniquity of calling in the aid of the Sultan of Turkey on behalf of the persecuted Protestant subjects of the Emperor of Austria.

The violent attacks made on him in other papers rejoiced his heart; he never failed to attack and defend himself with vigour; dealt his blows all round the ring, and when he appeared most humble was really most dangerous.

The election of 1706 resulted in the complete defeat of the High Church party; and immediately after the first issue of the third number of the "Review," Defoe, who enjoyed the confidence as well as the pay of the Government, was employed on a very delicate and important mission, viz., the negotiation for the political Union of England and Scotland. This difficult question had been for some time of paramount importance; for, while the English parliament had acquiesced without opposition in William's scheme for the Protestant succession of the House of Hanover, a large portion of their neighbours over the Border were warm adherents of the exiled Stuarts. The people of Edinburgh, moreover, were of opinion that the removal of the seat of government might prove injurious not only to their independence but to their trade. The Commissioners on both sides met in apparent amity, but among the populace the greatest excitement prevailed; and Defoe, an insignificant but credited agent, passed to and fro among them, preaching peace, pouring oil on the troubled waters, and by his observations and reports on disaffected persons or communities, ably furthering the purpose in hand. When accused by his enemies of being a spy and informer he indignantly repudiated the accusation; but it is unfor-

tunate that, while the end was good, the means employed should be, to say the least, open to suspicion, and Defoe, flying before his creditors, and pretending to bewail his poverty in order to conceal the real object of his journey, is not altogether an edifying spectacle. To soothe the vanity of the Scotch he published, in 1706, "Caledonia," a highly laudatory poem with a flattering dedication attached; and for a whole year lived in Edinburgh, from whence, coach-borne to London, the "Review" made its regular appearance three days a week. Defoe, as before stated, always asserted that he was not a party man, and that all his writings were inspired by the purest patriotism. "I have never," he said, "loved parties, but with my utmost zeal have sincerely espoused the great and original interest of the nation and of all nations, I mean truth and liberty; and, whoever are of that part, I desire to be with them."

PORTRAIT OF DEFOE.

Engraved by Heywood from a picture by Richardson.

UNDER HARLEY AND GODOLPHIN

1706—1713

WHILE Defoe was residing in Edinburgh and wearying his English readers by the excessive space in his pages given to Scotch affairs, important events were taking place in England. The suspicion that Harley was wavering in his allegiance to the Whig Ministry was gaining ground, and when a clerk in his office was discovered to be furnishing private information to the King of France, the Queen, though unwilling to be coerced, even by Marlborough the once all-powerful favourite, was obliged to yield.

After the dismissal of his patron Defoe made a downward step in his career. For in spite of his repeated asseverations that he would never desert his benefactor, he took service with Godolphin. By so doing he would appear to have forfeited his claim to be regarded as the friend and partisan of Harley, and to have deliberately chosen the inferior position of an hireling. But that this was not his own view of the circumstances is evident; and when accused by his enemies of disloyalty to his chief he declared that Harley

himself recommended this course of action in the following words: "Nay, not so, Mr. Defoe; I shall not take it ill from you in the least; besides, it is the Queen you are serving, who has been very good to you." However this may be, Godolphin, who thoroughly appreciated the special qualifications of the able diplomatist, continued to employ him both as writer and secret service agent. The "Review" became staunchly Whig, and Defoe, supporting Godolphin, declared against a supposed Tory plot, and advocated the continuance of the war.

The scare of a French invasion, accompanied by the unsuccessful descent of the enemy's fleet on the Scotch coast fortunately came to nothing; and Defoe, who had been employed in collecting information about disaffected persons for the use of the Prime Minister, now took a tour through the English counties advocating the cause of the Government with a view to the approaching general election. The "Review," as well as supporting the Ministry, advertised itself as being in a position to impart the most recent and correct intelligence on Scotch affairs, and constantly proclaimed the loyalty of the Presbyterian party. The approach of a general election roused public feeling to a pitch of excitement, and Defoe's object now being to bring in a thoroughly Whig Ministry, he approached the subject in his usual paradoxical fashion, advising the electors to choose Tory representatives, adding, "We want a little instruction; we want to go to school with knaves and fools."

Harley with commendable prudence remained silent, leaving to St. John and Rochester the business of attack, which was carried on with great vigour; the battle of Oudenarde in 1708, giving the Tory party a fresh cause for complaint. "What is the good," they cried, "of these glorious victories? What do we gain by beating the French in campaign after campaign, if we never bring them to peace?" and they accused the Whigs of prolonging the war in order to put money into their own pockets. Defoe, in the "Review," opposed their arguments; he, too, was an advocate for Peace, but it must be peace with honour and the security of the Protestant succession. A balance of power firmly settled would, he said, be fatal to peace at home.

In 1710 a complete change in the Ministry was finally brought about by the Sacheverell incident, at which time Defoe had the gratification of crossing swords with an ancient enemy, and indulging to the full in his taste for paradoxical writing. Some of the weightiest and best of his political pamphlets were written on this occasion, and Defoe, fighting his adversary with his own weapons, had decidedly the best of the contention. His flow of language was greater than that of the scholarly divine, and he did not stop to pick his phrases. "Let him go on," he said, "to bully moderation, explode toleration, and damn the Union; the gain will be ours." A year previously the turbulent cleric had seized the opportunity, when the prolongation of the war had caused widespread dis-

tress, to preach a violent sermon against the Whig Ministry, and, not content with this, to insult Godolphin by bestowing upon him the opprobrious nickname of "Vulpone." Had those in authority been content to treat this conduct with the silent contempt which it deserved, the incident might soon have been forgotten; but instead, the offender was summoned to appear before the bar of the House of Commons. Persecution always makes martyrs and frequently ends in arousing the sympathy of the majority; so during the weeks that elapsed before the trial the popular excitement steadily increased, and the sentence finally passed upon him, that the obnoxious sermon should be burned by the common hangman, and that the writer should abstain from preaching for three years, was looked upon by his partisans as an acquittal. Public feeling against the Ministry increased daily; and the Queen, after sacrificing first Sunderland and then Godolphin to satisfy the popular fury, in 1710 recalled Harley to office. Harley's attempt to co-operate with the remaining Whigs proved ineffectual owing to the intolerance of the extreme members of his party; and the Ministry once more became thoroughly Tory The ingenious Defoe, who contrived like a weather-cock to veer round with every wind, weathered the storm, always proclaiming his independence and reiterating the maxim that "Honesty is the best policy." Before Godolphin went out of office Defoe had humbly asked for his lordship's instructions as to his future con-

duct; and Godolphin, like Harley, recommended him to remain in the service of the Queen his mistress. When Harley was firmly established in power, Defoe, skimming daintily over thin ice, vowed that his one desire was to maintain the public credit, which had been grievously shaken during the recent change. What to him were Whig or Tory? His sole object was the prosperity of the people at large. "Though I don't like the crew, I won't sink the ship . . . we are all in the same ship and must sink or swim together."

In the pages of the "Review" he continued to advocate the cause of the Moderates. "If we have a Tory highflying Parliament," he exclaims, "we are undone. If we have a hot Whig Parliament, we Whigs are undone"; and the result of this balancing of sides was that both parties regarded him as a trimmer. Now that the Tories had come into power he protested vehemently against the bribery and corruption which characterized the elections. "It is not," he says, "a free Parliament you have chosen"; and he goes on to state that every one who supports the Protestant succession must be a Whig, and whoever does not support it is a traitor. The country squires, always the supporters of Tory government, had united to form the famous October Club, whose threefold object was to arouse High Church agitation, to impeach the Ministry, and to secure the disgrace of Marlborough. Defoe at once rushed to the attack, denouncing them as Jacobites and traitors.

Then once more "Occasional Conformity" became the question of the hour; this time introduced by Nottingham, who, although a strong High Churchman, bought over the support of the Whigs by promising to vote against the peace which the Tories were opposing. Defoe protested loudly against this scheming, but the Dissenters, instead of being grateful for his support, looked upon him as an ingenious time-server.

In 1712 Defoe was once more sent to Scotland, and though serving the Tory party, demonstrated his disagreement with the views of its extreme members by the publication of sundry Anti-Jacobite pamphlets with puzzling titles, such as "Reasons against the Succession of the House of Hanover," "Seasonable Warnings," and "What if the Pretender should come." Harley at this time was actually intriguing with the Jacobites, but it appears unlikely that Defoe was aware of his treachery.

In the meanwhile the great question of the Spanish Succession had assumed a new aspect, for the Archduke Charles had ascended the throne of Austria, and to allow him to become master in Spain would have been even more disastrous to the Balance of Power than the accession of a grandson of Louis XIV. Defoe's advice was, "Give Spain to Philip and his heirs, and they will become as Spanish as the Spaniards themselves." A division of the Spanish possessions in Europe between the Empire and France, and those in America between England and Holland, was his recipe for an international peace.

He proceeded to point out the ruinous cost of the war and the absolute necessity for peace at any price; a false move on his part, and Louis XIV, always on the alert to take advantage of his neighbours' misfortunes, at once proposed conditions of peace by no means so advantageous to England as might have been expected after a successful campaign. The Treaty of Utrecht contained no mention of the West Indies, which continued to belong to Spain; and contained a clause removing restrictions which hampered the trade with France, by no means popular with the trading classes in England, who considered that the advantages were all on the other side. Defoe has been regarded as an advocate of Free Trade, but it is certain that he had no conception of the meaning of the term in its present significance.

In 1714 the Queen, whose health had long been failing, died without naming her successor, the Electress Sophia having preceded her to the grave but a short time previously. "Had the English Tories been as bold and resolute as they were clever and crafty, had the Prince, whom the nation loved and pitied, been equal to his fortune, George Louis had never talked German in St. James's Chapel Royal."

After some delay the Elector of Hanover, with his train of German favourites, conspicuous among whom were his elderly mistresses, the Ladies Kielmansegge and Schulenberg, arrived in England, and ascended "the throne of his ancestors," as he was pleased to call the country

which, owing to a train of unhappy circumstances, was compelled to seek a ruler of foreign nationality and breeding. A ruler, moreover, of no less vicious tendencies than the Stuart princes. George I was a Protestant only in name, his chief merit in the eyes of his new subjects was his preference for Hanover. While absent on the continent he permitted his adopted country to govern itself by means of its national representatives, without much interest or interference on the part of its nominal sovereign.

AS AUTHOR AND JOURNALIST

1715—1731

IN the fourth year of the reign of George I, a change which took place in the Ministry was productive of some important consequences to Defoe. In 1864, buried beneath the accumulations of the State Paper Office, his indefatigable biographer, William Lee, discovered six important letters, which had hitherto been unknown or forgotten. These letters of Defoe serve to throw light upon a very obscure chapter in his history, and, to a certain extent, exonerate him from the obloquy heaped upon him in respect to his mysterious connection with a Tory paper, entitled "Mist's Journal." In one of these letters, written to Lord Stanhope, the Home Secretary, on 26th April, 1715, the writer dwells at some length on the nature of his employment under the late government. "That he had undertaken, for better concealment of his purpose, to appear as if in disgrace with the Whigs, and that he got himself introduced to Mist under the guise of a translator of foreign news, so as to be able to keep the 'Journal' within a circle of secret management, also to prevent the mischievous

part of it, yet that neither Mist, nor any of those concerned with him, should have the least guess or suspicion by whose direction this was done."

"I venture," he says, "to assure his lordship that the sting of the mischievous paper should be entirely taken out, though it was granted that the style should continue Tory as it was, that the Party might be *amused* and not set up another." In other passages he apologizes for not having been able to erase an obnoxious paragraph inserted by Mist, and speaks of his services in having suppressed a seditious pamphlet. That Defoe filled an important though unrecognized position under the government is unmistakable; but when the carefully concealed secret came to light Mist drew his sword on his treacherous subordinate and threatened his life. Defoe's injured innocence on this occasion was a consummate piece of acting; when attacked he disarmed his opponent, caused his wounds to be carefully attended to, and loudly expressed his pained indignation at the ingratitude of all mankind, Mist in particular.

Defoe's connection with the "Mercator," a commercial journal which, though never openly acknowledged, seems to have been generally known, came to an end in the last days of the reign of Queen Anne, and having failed in his attempt to get a legitimate footing on the staff of the "Flying Post," a Whig organ, he engaged with its former printer, one William Hood, to issue a spurious edition. This piratical "Flying Post" violently attacked the Tories and eulogized

the new King; but its career was speedily brought to a termination by a prosecution for libel by the Earl of Anglesey, and the editor found himself once more within the clutches of the law. While on bail, awaiting his trial, he occupied his time by the publication of a series of pamphlets: "The Secret History of One Year"—that is, the year after William's succession; "Advice to the People of England"; and "The Secret History of the White Staff," in two parts. Following these came his "Appeal to Honour and Justice," during the writing of which he was seized with an apoplectic fit, and the work appeared with a conclusion by the publisher. On his recovery, which was not long delayed, he issued the third part of the "Secret History," which together with a pamphlet, entitled "An Account of the Conduct of Robert, Earl of Oxford," were intended as a defence of the fallen Minister; though the latter, probably from prudent motives, denied all knowledge of them. His next occupation was as writer of a series of tracts represented as the work of a Quaker. In one of these he reproves a Dissenting Minister for advising the Whig government to take severe measures; in a second he accuses Sacherevell of hypocrisy in taking the oath of abjuration; and a third is a reproof to the Duke of Ormonde for his encouragement of High Church mobs.

In March of the same year appeared the first volume of "The Family Instructor," followed shortly after by "The Memoirs of a Scots Gentleman in the Swedish Service in the Wars of

Charles XII." At his trial, which took place in July of the same year, Defoe was found guilty, but the deferred sentence was never executed. His private representations to the judge that he had always acted in the Whig interest were taken into account; also the value of his previous services, and the probability that he might still be useful in his former capacity as a secret agent. On these considerations the party then in power agreed "to pardon all former mistakes."

At the time when the quarrel with Mist had led to such a painful consequence, Defoe was already contributing to two other papers, viz., the "Daily Post" and "Whitehall Journal," the latter of which appeared three times a week. When his connection with them was at an end he became a correspondent to "Applebee's Journal," and continued to work for it until the spring of 1726. But after 1724 he ceased to sign his political articles, for though always a staunch Whig, his secret connection with the Tory editor now caused him to be regarded with suspicion as an ally of the Jacobites, "a generation," he says, "whom I profess my very soul abhors."

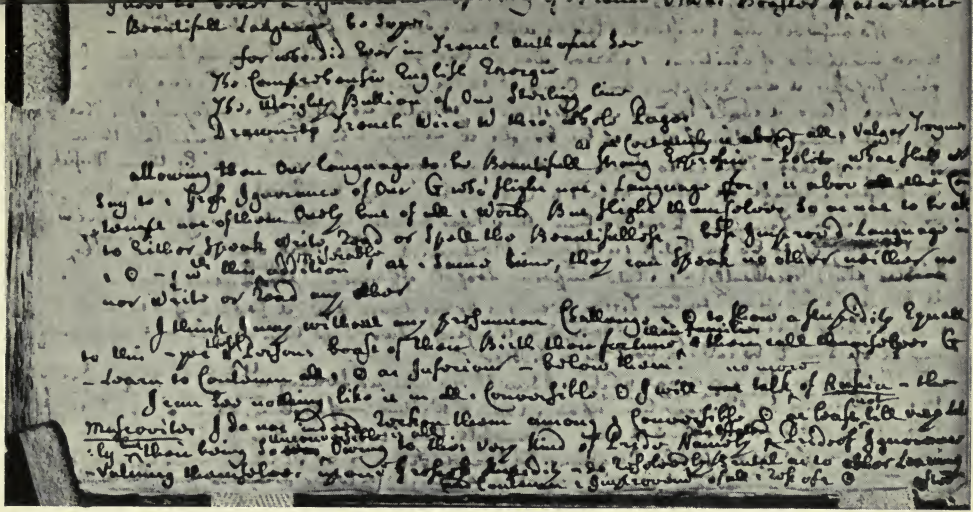
The pages of these ancient periodicals contain the germs of many of his longer "Fictitious Narratives," and it was in the year 1719, while residing in his country house at Stoke Newington, that he composed and published the work by which he is best known and will always be remembered, "The Life and Strange Surprizing Adventures of Robinson Crusoe of York,

They Signd Orders Warrant Confirmations - all publick acts used full for a Governor of a Province or a Generall Prior

This was strange to me, & made Sharp to Turn the Scale of Success to be sure of it but when I asked whether he the Story was any addition to their Fame or Valour ; Courtesy, he found the Turn and he did make them Proficient in such high Heroick Enterprizes & more strange and then to crown the Business Valour but then he added, they was nothing to, Cato - I, as he had Founded ; Romulus Lawgiver, he go up ; Way he Rose in was Very Proper they he Will Triumph because of before they were to Conquer them, & Fair Play Parliament [illegible] he Could not Compose a Speech he ought to Write - Good - the able Profitable to Speak ; is as his ordinarily called to Write good English but to eschew also ; he did not like Cow ; Latter Was to be done Wings Horses Lions in for Latin - French too & the Dutch was Intolerable, so I found Latter then to be Trouble with any Learning of Younger he Would not Write Longer Letter one also - ; Chair he will by for allow a good English and Latin for Wife

Thus as I said before ; Gt. Use utterly mistaken, & so for from using ordinary Silvest Languages of French - Latin Heathen Gods able to Write or Speak True English Could by to Speak a Romance to be Composed into

As in all Languages there is a Beauty of Stile & Cadence - Most Harmony in Expression So in English much more than any other Tongue Known in Europe



PART OF THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT OF THE "COMPLEAT ENGLISH GENTLEMAN."

Circa 1729.

(*British Museum.*)

Mariner." Of secondary interest were later works entitled the "Life and Adventures of Duncan Campbell," "The Memoirs of a Cavalier," "Captain Singleton," "Moll Flanders," the "Journal of the Plague Year," and "The History of Colonel Jacques." These were followed in rapid succession by "Roxana," "A Tour through Great Britain," "A New Voyage round the World," "The Complete English Tradesman," "The Political History of the Devil," "System of Magic," "Essay on the Reality of Apparitions," "Religious Courtship," "Everybody's Business is Nobody's Business"—all being issued in the short space of ten years.

The second number of "The Family Instructor," a volume of "The Compleat English Gentleman," some tracts on "Street Robberies," and an introduction to a new weekly journal, "The Universal Spectator," edited by his son-in-law, Henry Baker, appear to have been his final efforts.

To this Henry Baker we owe a fleeting glimpse of Defoe's domestic life, his handsome house standing in four acres of garden, and his three lovely daughters. Of his sons, one, Daniel, emigrated to Carolina; and the second, Benjamin, editor of "The London Journal," was prosecuted for libel and had to fly the country. His eldest daughter married a man named Langley; on the second, Hannah, he settled a sum of money he had won by speculating in South Sea stock. She died unmarried, and was buried in Wimborne Minster. The third, Sophia, to whom he ap-

peared fondly attached, was the wife of the above-mentioned Henry Baker.

The weary old man, now grievously afflicted with gout and stone, was not destined to enjoy many peaceful days by his own fireside. In 1729 he disappeared, remaining for some time in hiding in a mean lodging near Greenwich. The true reason for his sudden departure from his home is not known. Was he in terror of his old enemy Mist, who was hurling denunciations on him from the other side of the Channel? Had his creditors become pressing? or did senile decay, acting on his brain, produce hallucinations of some unknown danger? It is impossible to say. He may have been honest according to his lights, and probably considered himself to be so; but his life had been a succession of subterfuges; he had ever tried to hunt with the hounds and run with the quarry, and when the time came to shuffle off this mortal coil the old fox ran to a hidden earth at last. "I am so near my journey's end," he says, in his last letter written from Greenwich, "and am hastening to the place where the weary are at rest and the wicked cease to trouble, be it that the passage is rough and the way stormy, by what way soever He please to bring me to the end of it, I desire to finish life with this temper of soul in all cases. Te Deum Laudamus."

Defoe, then seventy years of age, died on 26th April, 1731, at a lodging in Ropemaker's Alley, Moorfields. The admirer of Defoe can make no solemn pilgrimage to his birthplace, but may, if

he will, visit his tomb. Five minutes' walk from Liverpool Street Station, on either side of the noisy City Road, are Wesley's Chapel and Bunhill Fields. In front of the former is the monument of Susannah Wesley, daughter of Samuel Annesley, and reputed sister-in-law to Defoe. To the left an iron gateway gives entrance to the old Nonconformist burial ground, which, when closed against interment in 1852, already contained one hundred and twenty thousand bodies. Here are monuments to John Bunyan, Isaac Watts, and Daniel Defoe. On the flat stone that formerly covered the grave of the author now stands a marble obelisk with the following inscription:

DANIEL DEFOE,

BORN 1661 DIED 1731

AUTHOR OF ROBINSON CRUSOE

"This Monument is the result of an appeal in the 'Christian World' to the boys and girls of England for a fund to place a suitable monument on the grave of Daniel Defoe. It represents the united contributions of 1,700 persons, September, 1870."

The occasion referred to on the monument was not the first time that the British schoolboy had been asked to put his hand in his pocket in the name of his favourite author. In 1858 Mr. Landor addressed to "The Times" a noble eulogy on Defoe, calling upon every schoolboy and every man in England who had been one,

to give his penny at once to save the descendant he had left. "A Crusoe without a Friday is an island to him a desert." This letter referred to James Defoe, aged seventy-seven, the great-grandson of the author of "Robinson Crusoe," then living in great poverty at Kennington. "Let our historians ask themselves," he cried, "if no tribute is due in long arrears to the representative of him who wrote 'The History of the Plague of London.' . . . 'It was in the power of Johnson to relieve the granddaughter of Milton, Sirs,' it is yours to prop up the last scion of Defoe." A subscription, opened by Mr. Dickens and Mr. Knight, brought in a small sum, about two hundred pounds; more was not then required, as James Defoe died 19th May, 1857. Only as recently as 1870 the Government granted a small pension to three maiden ladies who were the last surviving members of the family of Defoe.

ECONOMICAL, SOCIAL, AND DIDACTIC WRITINGS

THE "Essay upon Projects," written at the time when Defoe was in hiding at Bristol, was published in the days of his prosperity, when he was in favour with King William, and holding an appointment under Government. "The several chapters of this book," he says in his preface, "are the results of particular thoughts occasioned by conversing with the public affairs during the present war with France. . . . If this has put me as well as others on inventions and projects, so much the subject of this book, it is no more than a proof of the reason I give for the general projecting humour of the nation."

The introduction begins with the well-known proverb, "Necessity," which is allowed to be "the mother of invention," has so violently agitated the wits of men at this time that it seems not at all improper by way of distinction to call it "The Projecting Age." After the preface and the introduction follows "A History of Projects," wherein the author touches lightly on the building of the Ark, the erection of the Tower of Babel, the working of metal by Tubal

Cain, and the construction of musical instruments by his brother Jubal, these being, he asserted, the first human projects.

The Essay itself opens with the following proposition: "Man is the worst of God's creatures to shift for himself. No other animal is ever starved to death: Nature without has provided them with both food and clothes, and Nature within has placed an instinct which never fails to direct them to proper means for a supply, but Man must either work or starve, slave or die." The first section treats of Banks, the second of Highways; after these follow Assurances, Friendly Societies, a proposal for a Pension Office, and Wagering. The seventh section, "On Fools," deals with the ineffective provision made for lunatics; in the eighth, which is on Bankrupts, he fervently protests against the iniquitous and foolish system of imprisoning the debtor, thereby depriving him of the means of satisfying his creditors and improving his own position. The tenth is of a Court Merchant; and in the last, "Of Seamen," he inveighs with much vigour and excellent reasoning against Naval Abuses, more especially the barbarous and injudicious custom of the press-gang in time of war.

Defoe was a man greatly in advance of his age; and in no respect is this superiority so clearly shown as in the great scheme in which is foreshadowed the important changes which have taken place in all educational matters during the century which lies immediately behind

us. His first proposition was for an academy of letters on the plan of that founded in France by Richelieu, Minister of Louis XIV, "to encourage polite learning, to establish purity of style, and advance the so much neglected faculty of correct language." He urged upon William how worthy of his high destiny it would be to eclipse the rival sovereign in the peaceful arts, as much as he had eclipsed him in the field of battle; but William was not destined to add the benefit of a polite Academy of Letters to the sum of those benefits he conferred upon his adopted people.

A Military Academy for instruction in the Art of War formed another branch of Defoe's most comprehensive plan, but even more interesting was a carefully thought out, practical scheme for an "Academy for Women." How many of the excellent people who have promoted with such success the Ladies' Colleges that are one of the most striking innovations of the later Victorian age are aware that Daniel Defoe, the author of "Robinson Crusoe," had formulated a scheme for Women's Universities, and had stood forth as the champion of Women's right to the same educational advantages as Man.

His rare and high opinion of women had given him a just contempt for the female training of the time; he could not think, he said, "that God had made them so delicate, so glorious creatures, to be only stewards of our houses, cooks and slaves. A woman well bred, well taught, furnished with the additional accomplishment of knowledge and beha-

viour, is a creature without comparison; her society is the emblem of sublime enjoyment; she is all softness, sweetness, love, wit, and delight."

That Defoe should have held so exalted an opinion of the other sex is the more surprising considering the character of the heroines in his novels, and the many unflattering remarks passed upon women in some of his other writings, but in his day both the upper and lower circles of Society were utterly corrupt, the Puritan yoke had been hard to bear, and the tide of fashion set strong in the opposite direction. Drink, gambling, extravagance, absolute license in manners and conversation seem to have been common to both sexes. It would be interesting to know if in that family circle about which so little is known, Defoe had found the ideal woman he so minutely describes. Of his two wives hardly anything is known, but it is possible that the hardworked journalist and politician found leisure in the intervals of business to educate to this high standard those three charming daughters of whom mention is made in Henry Baker's correspondence.

"I have often thought of it," says he in this essay, "as one of the most barbarous customs of the world, considering us as a civilized and a Christian country, that we deny the advantages of learning to women. We reproach the sex every day with folly and impertinence while I am confident that had they the advantages of education equal to us, they would be guilty of less than ourselves . . . their youth is spent to teach them to stitch and sew and make

baubles . . . they are taught to read indeed, and perhaps to write their names or so, and that is the height of a woman's education. And I would but ask any who slight the sex or their understanding what is a man (a gentleman, I mean) good for who is taught no more . . . but why then should women be denied the benefit of instruction? If knowledge and understanding had been useless additions to the sex God Almighty would never have given them capacities, for he made nothing needless. . . . Shall we upbraid women with folly when it is only the error of this inhuman custom that hindered them being made wiser? To remove this objection, and that women might have at least a needful opportunity of education in all sorts of useful learning, I propose the draught of an Academy for that purpose.

"(1) All ladies who enter into the house should set their hand to the orders of the house, to signify their consent to submit to them.

"(2) As no woman should be received but who declared herself willing, and that was the act of her choice to enter herself, so no person should be compelled to continue there a moment longer than the same voluntary choice inclined her. The charges of the house being to be paid by the ladies, everyone that enters should have only this encumbrance that she should pay for the whole year, though her mind should change as to her continuance.

"(3) An Act of Parliament should make it felony without clergy for any man to enter by force or fraud into the house or to solicit any woman though it were to marry while she was in the house."

These rules might be adopted almost without alteration into the ladies' colleges of the present time, but while due credit must be given to Defoe for the enlightened attitude he held on

this important matter, it must not be forgotten that the idea of a ladies' college had already been formulated by a "new woman" of the seventeenth century, Mrs. Mary Astell. Defoe, in this Essay, refers to her as an ingenious lady, and her book he calls "Advice to the Ladies." Its full title was "A Serious Proposal to the Ladies for the Advancement of their True and Greatest Interest, by a Lover of her Sex." It was issued in 1694, three years before the appearance of the Essay on "Projects." Defoe denies having been influenced by her in propounding this scheme, and it is true that the Essay was written some years before its publication, but the fact of its appearing at this time may be regarded as an example of his especial facility for putting before the public the topic then most likely to excite interest.

From this account of the position of the women of the upper classes, the transition to the ever vexed question of the maid servant is an obvious one, and from the tract entitled "Everybody's Business is Nobody's Business" comes an account of the difficulty of obtaining and keeping women servants, which might have appeared in the columns of the "Nineteenth Century," or have been reported from a debate at the Pioneer Club.

"These are now so scarce that from thirty or forty shillings a year their wages have increased to seven or eight pounds. The country girl, hardly a week in her place, is persuaded by a committee of her fellows to give warning. Instead of leather shoes she must

have laced, instead of a linsey woolsey petticoat a silk one. They entertain their relations at your expense, if anything displeases them they will go away next day, if you want to get rid of them you must pay a month's wages. Owing to the smartness of their attire it is impossible to distinguish the maid from the mistress; on one occasion being required to salute the ladies of a family I included the chambermaid to the great amusement of the company."

Among Defoe's didactic writings given to the world with the ostensible purpose of providing profitable moral instruction, none is more bewildering as to its real meaning than the "Political History of the Devil." Its elaborate and comprehensive title-page is in itself a study of no small interest. It will certainly "amuse" (to use this word not only in its usual significance but in the special sense given to it by Defoe) the reader, though whether in so doing it fulfils its object is a matter of some uncertainty.

"The Subject," he says in the preface of the fourth edition, "is singular, and has been handled after a singular Manner: The wise Part of the World has been pleas'd with it, the merry Part has been diverted with it, and the ignorant part has been taught by it; none but the malicious part of the World has been offended at it; who can wonder then, that when the Devil is not pleased, his friends should be angry. 'Tis evident that the Devil, as subtle and frightful as he is, has acted the ridiculous and foolish Part, as much as most of God's Creatures and daily does so. And he cannot believe 'tis any sin to expose him for a foolish Devil as he is, or show him to the world that he may be laughed at."

THE POLITICAL

HISTORY

of the

DEVIL

containing

His Original
A State of his Circumstances
His Conduct Publick and Private
The various Turns of his Affairs
from Adam down to this present
Time.

The various Methods he takes
to converse with mankind
With the manner of his making
Witches, Wizards, and Conjurers
and how they sell their Souls
to him,

THE WHOLE

Interspersed with many of the Devil's Adventures.

To which is added

A DESCRIPTION of the Devil's dwelling, vulgarly called

HELL

The Fourth Edition

Bad as he is, the Devil may be abused,
Be falsely charged, and causelessly accus'd;
When Men unwilling to be blamed alone,
Shift off their crimes on him which are their own.

LONDON

Printed for Joseph Fisher, facing Tom's Coffee House, in Cornhill, 1739.

(*Price Three Shillings*)

This view of the easy gullibility of his Satanic Majesty is quite in accordance with popular tradition, and legends of the Devil usually have as their motive the "besting" of the Old 'Un, or more politely the Old Gentleman, by some pious or learned Churchman, or even some astute country yokel more canny or more sceptical than his fellows. In the introductory chapter the author makes the following somewhat startling assertion:

"The Devil's History is not so hard to come at as it seems to be; his Original and the first rise of his family is on record."

Defoe then gives a long list, chapter and verse, of the various names by which the Devil appears in the Scriptures, also a brief outline of Old Testament history with the part played by the Devil in the domestic affairs of the Patriarch. The story of Cain is enlivened by a piece of history in verse which records

> How *Cain* in the Land of *Nod*,
> When the rascal was alone,
> Like an Owl in an ivy Tod,
> Built a city as big as Roan.

Had the Devil, he suggests, had any true antiquarian instincts, he could have cleared up many still unsolved points of interest concerning the antediluvian world.

A favourite subject with this author is the special liability of womankind to fall into the toils of the wily deceiver, and

"Walking devils," he says, "are generally of the female sex. Whether it be that the devil finds it less difficult to manage them, or that he lives quieter with them, or they are better for his business than the men. I shall not now venture into a dispute about that, perhaps he goes better disguised in the fair sex than otherwise. Witches too were formerly old and ugly night hags who rode on broom sticks, and were accompanied by cats. But now the devil walks about the world clothed in beauty and covered with the charm of the lovely."

Defoe was a careful student of Milton, but did not agree with that poet in his estimation of the character of the Archfiend. He even went so far as to write a continuation of "Paradise Lost," by no means worthy of the original, which has never been accepted by the public who indeed are generally unaware of its existence.

Another work to which some reference should be made is "A Tour through Great Britain," the title-page of which is here given. It was issued anonymously in three volumes (1724-1727).

The varied nature of the contents of these volumes may be gathered from the title-page, and the book-lover, turning over at random its closely printed leaves, will find in them instruction and entertainment, judiciously intermingled. Defoe wrote with success for readers of all tastes and capacities, hence, though Men, Manners, and Morals constitute his favourite theme, he did not disdain to include agricultural products and manufactures, besides information antiquarian, archaeological, and topographical.

He visited cathedrals, colleges, and private

A

TOUR

Thro' the whole ISLAND of

GREAT BRITAIN

divided into

CIRCUITS or JOURNEYS

giving

A Particular and Diverting ACCOUNT of whatever is Curious and worth Observation, Viz.

I. A DESCRIPTION of the Principal Cities and Towns, their Situation, Magnitude, Government, and Commerce.

II. The Customs, Manners, Speech, as also the Exercises, Diversions, and Employment of the People.

III. The Produce and Improvement of the Lands, the Trade, and Manufactures.

IV. The Sea Ports and Fortifications, the Course of Rivers, and the Inland Navigation.

V. The Publick Edifices, Seats, and Palaces of the NOBILITY and GENTRY.

With Useful OBSERVATIONS upon the Whole.

Particularly fitted for the Reading of such as desire to Travel over the ISLAND

By a Gentleman

LONDON

Printed and sold by G. Strahan, in Cornhill. W. Mears, at the Lamb without Temple Bar. R. Francklin, under Tom's Coffee house, Covent Garden, S. Chapman at the Angel in Pall Mall. R. Stagg in Westminster Hall and J. Graves, in St. James's Street. MDCCXXIV.

houses of note, and, lest his auditors should become weary, enlivened the tedium of the journey with rhyming saw and entertaining anecdote. The spire of Chichester Cathedral, he relates, was struck by a fireball, and the hole torn through was so large that a coach and six might have passed through it. The people who dwell beneath its shadow have a tradition that if a heron be seen to perch on one of its pinnacles the death of the bishop of the diocese will shortly follow; a belief which met with a remarkable fulfilment in the time of Dr. Williams, for a butcher in South Street shot down the bird, his mother exclaiming as he did so, "You have killed the Bishop"; and the venerable prelate, Dr. Williams, jumping, a few days later, from a runaway coach, died of his injuries.

The famous Spire of Salisbury, 410 feet high, excited the enthusiasm of the traveller, "so slender is it, that in some places the bricks are not more than five inches thick." The inside decoration he said was unworthy of so magnificent a building, the painting being "more suitable for a drawing room or tavern." The pride of the citizens in their truly magnificent place of worship he recorded in the following lines:

As many Dayes as in one Year there be,
  So many Windows in one Church we see,
So many marble Pillars there appear,
  As there are Hours throughout the fleeting year,
As many gates as Moons one Year do view,
  Strange tales do tell yet not more strange than true.

His account of the Surrey district round Holmwood and Dorking is especially interesting in the details he gives concerning the sinking away of the waters of the mysterious "Mole," in its winding course at the foot of Boxhill. He also relates that one floodtime the lively youths of the neighbourhood raised a dyke round the water meadows and secured within it a marvellous draught of fishes drawn from all the ponds in the district. Boxhill itself was a famous place of resort, an enterprising publican from Dorking having arranged a refreshment bar in a cave under the shadow of the great beech trees, but the Sunday roystering became such an offence to sedate and quiet people that one Saturday night an expedition was organized, and the cave and its contents were blown up with gunpowder.

It is while speaking of the ancient families near Canterbury that the author introduced some lines respecting a famous sea-fight between Sir George Rooke and the French admiral Tourville, the final result of which remained undecided.

> The great Tourville Sir George did beat,
> The great Sir George beat him,
> But if that chance again to meet,
> George will his jacket trim.
> They both did fight,
> They both did beat,
> They both did run away,
> They both did strive again to meet,
> The clear and contrary way.

From the Hundred of Essex came an incredible story of the awful mortality among the

female population. Fourteen wives in succession was, it was stated, no uncommon allowance for one man, and a certain old farmer was then living with his twenty-fifth wife. These men were not Bluebeards, neither bow-string nor sack played a part in their domestic affairs; but while they, born and bred in the marshes, were inured to the climate, the women, brought from more salubrious air, soon fell victims to its pernicious influences.

At Dunwich the traveller noted how the swallows congregated in thousands along the coast for their winter migration; and near Weymouth, while visiting a decoy, he saw a great eagle caught in a trap that must have been a stranger, "as they do not breed in those parts."

While on the way to Cambridge, Defoe visited Newmarket, where the races were in progress, and he was shocked at "the sharping nature of the sport," and gave an anecdote of Mr. Frampton, the oldest and cunningest jockey, who at one time presided over the racing stables built by James II, within the circle of the British camp on Gogmagog Hill. From these hills the traveller got his first sight of the ancient seat of learning, and observed that the fens which border so closely upon it are the sink for thirteen rivers. His very interesting account of the important Stourbridge Fair, held annually between Casterton (Chesterton) and the Newmarket road, is well worth reading. Its staple products were wool and hops, brought there from great distances for shipment *via* Lynn and the northern ports. The great

square of the wool merchants was called the "duddery," but the origin of the name he could not ascertain.

The comparison which he made between the Universities is a just one, and might have proceeded from the mouth of a modern traveller.

"Oxford," he says, "has several things as a university which Cambridge has not. Yet Cambridge ought not to be so meanly thought, but that it has several things in it which cannot be found in Oxford. For example, the Theatre, the Museum or Chamber of Rarities, the Bodleian Library, the number of Colleges and the Magnificence of their Buildings are on the side of Oxford, yet King's College chapel and college is in favour of Cambridge, for as it is now Edifying it is likely to be most admired in a few years of all the Colleges in the World."

In Cambridge he remarked that the Colleges, Halls, and Houses for Literature are

"Promiscuously scattered up and down among the other parts of the town, and some even among the meanest of other buildings, as Magdalen College over the bridge in particular, but they are all incorporated together under the name of the University and are governed apart and distinct from the town. . . . As for Society; to any man who is a lover of learning or of learned men here is the most agreeable under heaven, nor is there any want of mirth or good company of other kinds but 'tis to the Honour of the University to say that the Governors so well understand their office, and the governed their Duty that here is very little encouragement given to those seminaries of Crime the Assemblies, which are so much boasted of in other places."

The slowly-moving wheels of Time slacken visibly as they approach these sacred spots dedicated by the wisdom and generosity of our forefathers to the acquirement of ennobling but unremunerative Knowledge, and Defoe, could he revisit the scene of his pilgrimage, might yet find sympathisers. While his sheets were going to press, internecine war was disturbing scholarly repose, and flysheets (if then in fashion), must have been falling "thick as leaves in Vallombrosa." For between Dr. Snape, the Vice-Chancellor, and Dr. Bentley, the Master of Trinity, a deadly feud was raging, and the latter having claimed Royal protection, the University was under a writ of mandamus to restore to him his rights. Defoe did not await the conclusion, but left Cambridge by the north-west road to Huntingdon, adding, as a last piece of information "that the foundations of the famous Addition, or Square of King's (Gibbs' Buildings) were even then being laid."

Defoe travelled as far south as Land's End, and it was his intention to follow up the coast to the extreme north of Scotland, but many attractions drew him inland. In the Peak country he made several excursions, and although disappointed in the "Giant's Grave," the discovery of a man with his wife and family, whose only home was a cave in the lead mines, sufficiently compensated him for the trouble of the climb. At Bloxam he teased the wenches standing out at the Mop Fair, calling it in derision the "jade fair." At "Burleigh House, by Stam-

ford town," he stared at the sprawling goddesses, with which Verrio, for twelve years painter-in-ordinary to the Earl of Exeter, had disfigured the staircases and ceilings.

The Welsh hills he compared with the Alps, and declared that Hannibal could never have passed over them. He even got as far as St. David's lonely pile, having indeed intended to visit all the outlying capes and promontories round our broken coast-line. A tour in Yorkshire furnished him with many subjects of interest. "It is full," he said, "of jockeys, and celebrated for its horses. The young fellows are naturally grooms bred in the stables and handle a currycomb as naturally as a young scrivener a pen and ink."

At the ancient "whitling making cutlery town of Sheffield" he quoted some lines from Chaucer.

> At Trumpington not far from Cambridge,
> There dwelt a miller upon a bridge,
> With a rugged beard and crooked nose,
> And a Sheffield Whittle upon his hose.

From Halifax he related a ghastly story of the guillotine used to punish cloth thieves. At a given signal a heavy axe fell across the neck of the criminal, but if during the intervening second he could raise himself from the block and flee away across the river, the punishment was rescinded. But such an escape Defoe regarded as impossible. Once a head was struck with such force from its trunk that it fell into the basket of a passing market woman, who went on her way unaware of the grisly burden. From the

severity of this particular form of justice comes the saying, "From Hell, Hull, and Halifax, Good Lord deliver us."

York Cathedral reminded him of Henry VII's Chapel, and pleased him except in the lowness of the towers. Comparing it with similar buildings seen on his travels he wrote, "The Royal chapel at Windsor and King's College chapel in Cambridge are indeed very gay things, but neither of them can compare with the Minster at York." Before leaving Doncaster he entered in his note book the following epitaph on a benefactor of the poor.

Howe, Howe who 's there?
I Robin of Lancaster,
And Margaret my fere.
That I spent I had,
That I gave that I have,
That I left that I lost,
Quoth Robertus Byrks who in the world did reign
Three score years and seven but lived not one.
Anno 1579.

An anecdote of a sporting character is related of Whitwell Park near Carlisle. This is the tradition of a famous hound named Hercules who chased a stag from thence to the red Kirk in Scotland, and back again, a distance of sixty miles. On reaching the edge of the park the deer leaped the paling, falling dead within, while the hound, equally exhausted, departed this life on the outer side. The event was commemorated in a distich:

Hercules killed Hart a grease
And Hart a grease killed Hercules.

It does not appear that Defoe carried out his intention of travelling from Land's End to John o' Groat's House. Whether this would have prevented him from describing the last-named locality as if he had really been there is by no means so certain. Defoe was constantly on the move, and when on his political journeys no doubt noted down, or consigned to some chamber in his marvellous memory, information on all sorts of topics. Some of the places so graphically described he actually visited; the accounts of others suggest that they may possibly have been worked up from some literary source. It is a somewhat suspicious fact that he so very seldom alludes to the weather which usually plays so important a part in travellers' tales. Once indeed in Cumberland he was lost in a snow storm when in company with two other gentlemen and their servants. This he noted was in August. He does not as a rule mention the time of year. Again, in one place while travelling in Derbyshire he speaks of the servants holding the horses "dragoon like" while the owners climbed the hill, but he seldom states the method of his journeying, nor whether he was alone or in company. He does not give the name of the hostelries at which he put up, nor the prices he paid, a curious omission for a man who made his hero on a desert island describe everything in such minute detail. Probably the

tour, though giving such an interesting and probably accurate picture of England during the early part of the eighteenth century, was no true pilgrimage, but a kind of *potpourri*, compiled at home from various sources, diaries, notebooks, guides, personal experiences, and oral tradition. Only the first issue has any true literary value, though many successive editions have been edited and added to by other hands, notably the second, for which Samuel Richardson, author of "Clarissa," made himself responsible.

VARIOUS FICTITIOUS WRITINGS

CHARLES LAMB thus speaks of Defoe's fictitious works:

It has happened not seldom that one work of some author has so transcendantly surpassed in execution the rest of his compositions that the world has agreed to pass a sentence of dismissal upon the latter, and to consign them to total oblivion and neglect. . . . While all ages and descriptions of people hang delighted over the "Adventures of Robinson Crusoe," and will continue to do so we trust while the world lasts; how few comparatively will bear to be told, that there exist other fictitious narratives by the same writer, four of them at least of no inferior interest except what results from a less felicitous choice of situation. "Roxana," "Singleton," "Moll Flanders," "Colonel Jack," are all genuine offspring of the same father."—*Critical Essays.*

They are no longer read, says another critic, because they are not fit to be read; and Thackeray, writing on Hogarth, represents the reprobate prentice, Tom Idle, as poring over "Moll Flanders."

Hogarth's pictures, and Defoe's novels are alike interesting to the historian as graphic, if exag-

gerated, representations of a bygone age. The talent of both artist and author was undeniable, but you would not hang your breakfast room with scenes from "The Rake's Progress," nor keep "Roxana" or "Singleton" on your bedside table. Defoe wrote for a public coarser, and not less immoral, than that which thronged the play-houses after the Restoration. Sin had been stripped of her glittering garments and cloaked in hypocrisy, and in that consisted the difference. The relation of a succession of obscene anecdotes was excused by the interpolation of interminable paragraphs of prosy moralizing. Defoe was a typical Englishman of the Hanoverian period, and wrote for the men of his generation. To young people of either sex the perusal of Defoe's Criminal stories is likely to be neither pleasurable nor profitable, and the general reader will wade with considerable difficulty through the loosely-strung narratives.

Defoe has been called the father of the English Novel. This is a misnomer; for these stories are scarcely even novels with a purpose, but gigantic homilies with a dominant motive that wickedness does not pay in the long run. "Into his writing the idea of the beautiful never enters; when he comes to fiction it is like a presbyterian and plebeian with low subjects and moral aims to treat of the adventures and reform the conduct of thieves, prostitutes, workmen, and sailors. His imagination was that of a man of business, not an artist, crammed and, as it were, jammed down with facts. He tells them as they come to

him without arrangement, and even in fiction his information is as precise as in a history."

"Journal of the Plague Year."

"Except in his inimitable 'Robinson Crusoe' none of the productions of Defoe ever obtained such a high degree of popular celebrity as his 'Journal of the Plague Year,' published in 1722." Like most of Defoe's works it appeared without the author's name, but no one who is at all acquainted with the general characteristics of his writings "can for a moment hesitate to agree with the voice of common fame which assigns it to him."

It is not "pure fiction" since it is compiled from authentic records, neither is it strictly speaking a history, though it has been quoted as such. It is an ingenious grafting of fiction on fact, the circumstances written down substantially correct, the framework of the story the invention of the ingenious author.

"It was in the year of our Lord 1665, says the author, that the Plague began in our City of *London*; after we were warned by the great Plague in *Holland* in the year 1664." The infection, it is supposed, was imported in some goods which came from thence, and its first victims are said to have been two Frenchmen living in Drury Lane. "St. Giles Parish" (*i.e.*, St. Giles-in-the-Fields, not St. Giles, Cripplegate, in which Defoe was born and died) "has the melancholy celebrity of originating the Plague of 1665. The most severe

visitation of that malady that ever occurred in this country, for in ten months no less than 97,306 of the inhabitants of London and its suburbs died of it." The church of St. Giles was rebuilt in 1730, and the lych gate with the curious wooden carving of the Resurrection erected three years after the calamity removed from the western side. The churchyard has since been inclosed, and there is no trace of the great trench in which, during July of 1665, were interred 1,350 bodies.

Daniel Defoe was four years of age at the time of the Great Plague, and could hardly have been an eyewitness of the terrible scenes, but he grew up among people who were actually present. He had the opportunity of consulting parish registers. The "Collection" of all the Bills of Mortality for 1665, issued under the title of "London's Dreadful Visitation" was probably familiar to him. He may have consulted Dr. Hodges' "Loimologia," published 1672, which is in Latin, and was translated by John Quincy half a century later, and also a certain manuscript treatise by Mr. W. Boghurst, medical practitioner, who resided in the metropolis during the whole prevalence of the disease. The "Journal" closes with the following stanza:

> A dreadful Plague in London was
> In the year sixty-five,
> Which swept a hundred thousand souls
> Away—and I alive.
>
> H. F.

The signature to these lines gives rise to the possible supposition that the original author may not have been Daniel, but some older relative, from whom the latter may have inherited not only a manuscript, but also that descriptive power which raises the account of this great national calamity into the first ranks of historical fiction. Be this as it may, it is Daniel Defoe who, in the guise of the respectable sadler, treads those deserted streets, and consults his Bible as to whether he should remain or fly from the plague-stricken city. It was he who met the poor naked creature who cried out, "Oh, the great dreadful God," that conversed with the man in the brown cloak who had gone crazy with grief, and walked up Holborn, where the people kept to the middle of the great street, lest they should mingle with those who came from infected houses. Defoe noticed that the Inns of Court were shut, he joined in the crowd that stared skyward, looking for an "angel clothed in white with a fiery sword in his hand"; and by the illusion of his narrative takes the reader with him.

"LIFE OF CAPTAIN SINGLETON," 1720; "ROXANA, THE FORTUNATE MISTRESS," 1723; "MOLL FLANDERS," 1722; "HISTORY OF COLONEL JACQUES," 1722.

"Defoe's novel writing," says a recent biographer, "grew naturally out of his general literary trade, they were manufactured from material for which he had ascertained there was

a market; the only novelty lay in the mode of preparation." A family likeness pervades the series, and the principal characters of these "realistic biographies" are the outcasts from a society system of whose sins and follies they are at once the cause and the result.

In the four most important "secondary" novels quoted by Lamb there is hardly a gleam of humour, except in the paradoxical statements of the Quaker surgeon in Captain Singleton's second voyage, who, while in principle averse to fighting, has always some good reason for engaging the enemy. There is a Quaker woman also in "Roxana," who, though superior in intellect and breeding to her neighbours, hides under her dove-coloured mantle a heart hardly less corrupt. Moll Flanders, Captain Singleton, and Colonel Jacques are all in the first instance the innocent victims of their parents' sins, they start in life waifs and strays in an unfriendly world, handicapped by the brand of illegitimacy. Roxana, brought up by respectable parents, is also to some extent the sport of circumstances, though each lapse into sin leaves her more hardened and depraved. In the course of an adventurous life she had amassed a considerable fortune, and when pressed to marry, she refused, saying:

"That woman was born free, and could she manage herself suitably, might enjoy that liberty to as much purpose as men do, but such were the laws of matrimony that in giving herself to a man she became but an upper servant, not only her person but her property being from that time entirely under

his control. He might reduce her from affluence to penury and she could have no redress."

Roxana, under these circumstances, preferred the position of mistress to that of wife, and when in the end she married the Dutch merchant, to whom for some time she had stood in this relation, her worst forebodings were fulfilled. He stripped her of all possessions, forbade her children to afford her any assistance, and left the unfortunate woman to die of starvation. A strong sense of justice was a salient characteristic of the author, and he had evidently pondered over and realized the iniquity of the ancient law respecting a married woman's property.

In the preface to "Moll Flanders" he refers to having omitted certain passages "as too bad for repetition," and expresses a hope that what is left will not offend the chastest reader, the most modest hearer; while the moral he hopes will keep the reader serious even where the story might incline him to be otherwise. There is no part of "Moll Flanders" conducive to mirth; if much objectionable matter has been omitted, much still remains. It may be a fine story—many competent critics have affirmed it to be so—but it is an exceedingly unpleasant one. Colonel Jacques is the masculine counterpart of Moll Flanders, like her, born to misfortune but differing from her in being innured to wickedness from his earliest years. He also is an example of a solitary, but it is the solitude of the outcast in a crowd, the Ishmael whose hand is

against every man. The opening scenes of the story are not without a certain pathos, but when the hero reforms and emigrates, the elements of romance are swallowed up in prosaic detail, even the circumstances attending his four matrimonial ventures fail to awake any very keen interest in the final developments of a tedious story.

"The Life and Piracies of Captain Singleton," though classed with the criminal novels, is also a traveller's tale of considerable merit. Here again we meet Defoe no longer clad in the sober garb of a London citizen, but with pistol and bandoleer, red waistcoat and bandana handkerchief, or whatever articles of costume are most befitting to the stage pirate. Singleton is not the dashing gallant adventurer for whom we have a lurking sympathy, but the tradesman who, in pursuit of gain, does not scruple to use any method to attain his inglorious ends. Singleton, like Stanley, walked across Africa, and visited the great lakes, the author having probably acquired his information about these little known regions from Portuguese sailors in his trading journeys to Spain. We do not know whether Defoe consulted Herodotus or Sir John Mandeville for his extravagant descriptions of the fauna of these regions, "devilish creatures thick as droves of bullock coming to a fair. When they fired among them one volley brought down three tigers and two wolves, besides an ill-gendered beast between a tiger and a leopard." What was the mysterious quadruped of which he speaks "between a buffalo and a deer, which

resembled neither, had no horns, legs like a cow, a fine head and neck like a deer"? Can it be possible that Sir Harry Johnston's Okapi is the original of the animal thus described?

Did the schoolboy of the eighteenth century, we wonder, pore with thrilling interest over the pages of "The New Voyage round the World"? another of Defoe's tales of adventure by sea and land. The leader of the expedition was in this case a *bona fide* merchant, the object of it—commercial, discovery being only incidentally thrown in. The methods of the expedition were peculiar, and would hardly commend themselves to our present notions of morality. When trading in Spanish waters a French captain assumed command of the little fleet; two Flemish merchants were employed to transact business in Dutch settlements; and while on the high seas the ships became English cruisers armed at all points for attack. A mutiny which took place on board was put down with a firm hand, the ringleaders being flogged and "pickled," which last process, it is stated, had the beneficial effect of preventing mortification of the wounds. At Madagascar a gang of seventy-four pirates was added to the original crew, and after a successful trading voyage to Ceylon, Singapore, the Malay Archipelago, and the islands of the Pacific, they sailed across the Southern Seas until the peaks of the Andes stood out against the sky. At one of their calling places they established a small colony of the Madagascar pirates, who were duly provided with five Bibles, seven Prayer Books,

and other religious works. A picked party of fifty-three men crossed the Andes, and after four months' absence, joined their comrades on the ships, somewhere in the neighbourhood of the Straits of Magellan. After this joyful event the long-winded narrative is brought to an abrupt conclusion by the return of the voyagers to their native land, with enough gold and pearls to set them up for life.

Two sets of Military Memoirs, formerly attributed to Defoe, are now to be excluded from his collected works. These are "The Life and Adventures of Mrs. Christian Davies," commonly called Mother Ross; and "The Memoirs of an English Officer," by Captain George Carleton. The first, the autobiography of a stalwart Irishwoman who served as a soldier, both foot and dragoon, is declared to be spurious, while Captain Carleton, who has found a niche in "The Dictionary of National Biography," is the real and not the supposititious author of his own memoirs.

"The Memoirs of a Cavalier" is a military journal of the Wars in Germany, and the Wars in England, between the years 1632 and 1645. It purports to have been taken from the original manuscript of Andrew Newport, son of Richard Newport, of High Ercole; and to have been found among the plunder after the battle of Worcester. Defoe, it is well known, is constantly guilty of literary subterfuge, in order to enhance the interest and give an air of veracity to his fictitious narratives; and he had a habit

of inserting circumstantial evidence with such ingenuity that it deceived even practised historians. Lord Palmerston, it is said, believed these memoirs to be genuine. The author, it must be remembered, was not entirely devoid of military experience, and had travelled in the north of England. Not only, therefore, had he some practical knowledge of his subject, but he may actually have traversed the ground he described so minutely, though not in company with Prince Rupert's defeated army.

If Defoe, in his preface to "The Memoirs of a Cavalier," sought to throw dust in the eyes of his readers, a more flagrant example is to be found in "A True Relation of the Apparition of Mrs. Veal to Mrs. Bargrave," which is the most important of several stories dealing with the supernatural. It commences as follows: "This relation is matter of fact, and attended with such circumstances as may induce any reasonable man to believe it. It was sent by a gentleman (a justice of the peace), at Maidstone in Kent, a very intelligent person, to his friend in London, as it is here worded. Which discourse is attested by a very sober and understanding gentlewoman who lived in Canterbury within a few doors of the house in which the within-named Mrs. Bargrave lived." In the confusion of ideas produced by the enumeration of so many respectable, understanding, intelligent persons, the reader, unless previously trained by the Society for the Promotion of Psychical Research, is unlikely to observe that none of the

evidence is first-hand; this, of course, being the deliberate intention of the author. The tract was attached to the fourth edition of "Drelincourt on Death," an exceedingly popular work, especially with the female sex, who, as Defoe somewhere remarks, are "extravagantly desirous of getting to heaven," and the ingenious writer, always on the alert to adapt himself to his audience, introduced certain touches of realism, especially calculated to impress the class of readers for whom "Drelincourt" was intended.

The story proceeds with much circumlocution, and the gentlewomen converse together nearly two hours, discussing not only their favourite religious works, but also on the iniquities of Mr. Bargrave and the disposition of Mrs. Veal's property. They sat down together to a dish of tea, though, it is stated, that the ghost did not actually partake of it. But the clinching argument was the disclosure of a secret known only to Mrs. Veal and one other person. When Mrs. Bargrave afterwards related to a mutual friend that Mrs. Veal had told her that her silk dress was not a new one, Mrs. Watson cried out: "You have seen her indeed, for none knew but Mrs. Veal and myself that the gown was scoured." "The True Relation," although the most popular and decidedly the most striking of Defoe's supernatural stories, is only one among many, and accounts of apparitions, witches, fortune-tellers, prophets, and such like, poured as freely from his pen as naval, military, and criminal adventures.

"THE DUMB PHILOSOPHER; OR, GREAT BRITAIN'S WONDER, DIKORY CRONKE" (1719); "LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF MR. DUNCAN CAMPBELL" (1720).

It is evident that through Defoe's teeming brain ran constantly recurrent, certain leading ideas. That of solitude, for example, is illustrated not only in the actual separation from mankind of Robinson Crusoe on his island, but in the loneliness of soul experienced by the heroes of his criminal novels. Another form of withdrawal which seems to have had an especial attraction for him, and is described in the "Serious Reflections," is that of the man who remained silent more than thirty years. There is an unauthenticated tradition that Defoe himself practiced the same abstinence in his family circle, and there is, at any rate, sufficient proof that he took particular interest in abnormal conditions of this kind, since he wrote at least two accounts of dumb prophets. Of these the more interesting is a certain Duncan Campbell, who possessed to an extraordinary degree the gift of second sight. If the principles of heredity be regarded as of any value, he possessed a just claim to this mysterious attribute, for he had an Icelandic mother and a Scotch father, and the learned in these subjects are of opinion that occult powers are highly developed in both races.

Dikory Cronke, the dumb philosopher, who was for many years a gentleman's servant (a

position for which this infirmity must have been a particular recommendation), recovered his speech suddenly in middle life, and in the language of a Zadkiel almanack, delivered a series of predictions, of which the following is a specimen: "In 1720 an eminent old lady shall bring forth five sons at a birth. The youngest shall live and grow up to maturity, but the four eldest shall either die in the nursery, or be all carried off by one sudden and unexpected accident." When he had thus delivered himself of his life-long burden, Dikory Cronke gave up the ghost.

THE
ORIGINAL
London
POST,
OR

Heathcot's Intelligence;

Being a Collection of the

Freſheſt Advices Foreign and Domeſtick.

Wedneſday October 7. 1719.

The Life and ſtrange Adventures of *Robinſon Cruſoe* of *York*, Mariner: Who lived Eight and Twety Years alone in an uninha-

wreck, wherein all the Men perished but himself. With an Account how he was at last strangely delivered by Pyrates. Written by himself.

The PREFACE.

IF ever the Story of any private Man's Adventures in the World were worth making Publick, and were acceptable when Published, the Editor of this Account thinks this will be so. The Wonders of this Man's Life exceed all that (he thinks) is to be found Extant; the Life of one Man being scarce capable of a greater Variety.

The Story is told with Modesty, with Seriousness, and with a religious application of Events to the Use to which wise Men always apply them, viz. to the Instruction of others by this Example, and to justify and honour the Wisdom of Providence in all the variety of our Circumstances, let them happen how they will.

The Editor believes the thing to be a just History of Fact; neither is there any Appearance of Fiction in it: And however thinks, because all such things are dispatched, that the Improvement of it, as well to the Diversion, as to the Instruction of the Reader, will be the same, and as such, he thinks, without further Compliment to the World, he does them a great Service in the Publication.

The

FACSIMILE OF THE FRONTISPIECE OF THE "ORIGINAL LONDON POST," CONTAINING THE LIFE OF ROBINSON CRUSOE, OCT. 7, 1719.

(*British Museum.*)

ROBINSON CRUSOE

DEFOE'S most notable work "The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe of York, Mariner," made its first appearance on 25th April, 1717, and so great was the demand of an appreciative public that three new editions were issued within four months, and the fortunate publisher, William Taylor, of the Ship, Paternoster Row, soon realized over a thousand pounds. He deserved this reward, for it was no light matter to have risked the publication of the work of a man so entirely discredited as Defoe, who was moreover nearly sixty years of age, broken in health, and had as yet produced no considerable work of this kind. The first volume, in octavo, contains 364 pages; it had a long title-page (reproduced here), and a preface in which the author vouches solemnly for the accuracy of his statements. The frontispiece, engraved on copper, had a portrait of the hero attired in goat-skin vest and breeches, with bare legs, crowned with a cocked hat, and carrying two guns and a large sword; in the background, a small ship tossing on the waves is perhaps symbolical of his destiny.

Encouraged by his success, in August of the same year, a few days after the issue of the fourth edition of the first volume, a second "Farther Strange Adventures" was given to the world. It did not attain the same degree of popularity; had it done so, Defoe, who, like the author of "Sherlock Holmes," was careful not entirely to kill off his hero, would doubtless have provided a third series of hair-raising adventures by land and sea. As it was he turned his energies into another channel, and the third volume which appeared the following year was entitled "Serious Reflections of Robinson Crusoe." These made little or no impression on the public, and are seldom published with the first two parts. In October, 1719, besides the four editions of bound volumes, the story appeared as a serial in "The Original London Post," of Heathcote's "Intelligencer." Since that the demand for new editions of "Robinson Crusoe" has never ceased;[1] and the illustrations alone of these different issues, when regarded in their historical aspect as representative of British pictorial art during three centuries, afford matter for reflection not entirely of a pleasurable kind. The book is extremely popular in France, has been translated into several European languages, also into Arabic, Persian, and Urdu. Over the Oriental mind it appears to exercise a peculiar fascination, and the traveller Burckhardt found

[1] Five copies of the first edition have realized four hundred pounds a piece.

his Arab servant reading it aloud to his companions at night over the camp fire.

The story of a recluse, even though an involuntary one, would have special interest to races who hold the life of a hermit in peculiar veneration, the philosophical endurance of the hero, while his method of adding up items of good and bad fortune, and weighing them together in the balance, is quite after the Oriental manner, and the absence of any element of feminine romance, an unpardonable omission to Western ideas, would be quite in accordance with their aspect of life. The influence of Crusoe is, however, by no means of this restricted nature; it is both general and particular; it has elements which appeal to the world at large, and it has a very special interest to members of the English-speaking races.

Everything that is good and beautiful in the way of Science, Art, and Literature, came to us either from, or by way of, Greece, and not the least precious part of our inheritance are the great naval and military epics of the old world, "The Iliad" and "The Odyssey." The highest praise ever bestowed on Defoe's romance is that, since the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey," no book has ever been so much read.

Since the days when Alfred the Great first armed the ships which defended our fair shores against the incursions of the savage Dane, the strength of the nation has been her wooden walls. Admirals whose noble names are inscribed on the roll of fame have upheld the glory of the

flag, and the proud motto, "Britannia rules the waves," is still nobly vindicated in the face of an envious world. We owe national security to our warships, but our prosperity depends on the merchant navy, which year by year, in sunshine and storm, traverses the "winedark sea," and our fighting seamen are always closely followed by the merchant and colonist.

Crusoe was wanting in the heroic qualities of the fighting seaman, but had the practical virtues of the "handy man." Thrown on his own resources, he bent man and nature to his inexorable will. He tells us exactly how he built his boat or his house, and how long he took to do it, everything is weighed and measured with absolute accuracy, and he makes a list like a lawyer's bill of the savages he kills. Defoe's hero is the recognized type of the successful colonist. "Why, this man could have governed a colony as well as founded it," said a statesman in the nineteenth century. Hot or cold, mountain or plain, healthy or malign, no matter the climate or the conditions, the English Crusoe nails the Union Jack to the mast, transfers it from his ship to his log hut, establishes himself there and creates a home. With the flag of his country he transports the necessaries of life, the gun, ammunition, spade, and the Bible. He plants, sows, and reaps; at first kills, but afterwards tames, the wild animals of the locality, and adds to their number the faithful hound, the harmless necessary cat. When brought into conflict with the aboriginal inhabitant his first effort is to release him from slavery,

and to make the whole world understand that England defends her subjects of whatever colour and race. He then endeavours to train him to his own idea of what is right, insists on morning ablutions, and clothes the free limbs in hideous garments of civilization unsuitable to the climate. He teaches his new follower to read the Bible and observe the Sabbath. His motto is let all things be done decently and in order. He believes in God, and in himself. These are the secrets of his success.

England as a military nation is slow in action, and apt to overrate her strength. Defoe's most stirring appeals fell on deaf ears until Louis XIV gave official recognition to a Stuart prince. Then the whole country rushed to arms. Time has brought many changes, but now as then, unwarrantable interference with our national prerogatives will unite political enemies in one common cause. Recent events have shown that there is something better than ignoble Peace, and that England rates at a high value the life of the humblest of her sailors. The firmly established position of Robinson Crusoe as an English classic is in the appeal it makes to the most deeply-rooted sentiments of the national character, and Defoe's prosaic but indomitable hero holds empire over the hearts of his countrymen as the "True born Englishman," no cross bred mongrel, but a man in whom are united the qualities of many races, Briton, Saxon, Norseman, and Dane.

The time-honoured theme of the ungrateful

son of respectable parents who runs away from home in search of adventures is the central idea of the story. The originality of the author is shown in the unusual presentation of a hackneyed subject. From the very beginning the hero's unromantic characteristics assert themselves. When he goes to sea it is not before the mast, but in the purser's cabin as a trader. He regards the misfortunes that befall him as a punishment for not having stayed at home and taken his place in the office. He is sober and honest, practising virtue not for its own sake but because it is more profitable in the long run. When the mantle of authority falls upon him he is just, kind, and merciful to his dependants, ruling them with a strictly paternal government, consulting not their wishes but his own preconceived notions as to what is good for them. Captain Singleton was Defoe masquerading as the captain of a pirate crew. Robinson Crusoe is not only Defoe, but also the type of the class to which Defoe belonged, the Nonconformist tradesman with one eye on heaven and the other on the shop door. In moments of perplexity he consults his Bible by the primitive method of opening at random its well-worn pages. He is a believer in dreams, premonitions, and the existence of the Devil in materialized form; he is also an observer of coincidences, recording the circumstance that he left the island after his long exile on the same day of the month that he had escaped from captivity with the Moors at Salee.

He was a man in the prime of life and part-

owner of a prosperous plantation in Brazil when the "wanderlust" seized him, and he set forth on the voyage which was fraught with such important consequences. When alone on the island, with no prospect of succour, as long as pen and ink lasted, he kept a diary in which the most trivial details are recorded with the dry precision of a merchant's day-book. But from time to time the monotony of his existence was varied by incidents of a more dramatic character. Such was the occasion when, having tried to sail round the island, he was caught in a current and only just missed being carried out to sea. When he reached dry land and fell asleep, worn out with fatigue and anxiety, he was presently awakened by hearing some one calling him by name, "Robin, Robin Crusoe, poor Robin Crusoe, where are you Robin Crusoe? Where are you? Where have you been?" He started up in terror, but it was no human being, not even a friendly demon whose voice thus penetrated his dreams, but the parrot he had tamed and taught to speak. An even more startling incident, his remarkable encounter with the "Devil," must be related in his own words:

"When looking further into the place, which was perfectly dark, I saw two broad, shining eyes of some creature, whether devil or man I knew not, which twinkled like two stars in the dim light from the cave's mouth, shining directly in and making the reflection.

"However, after some pause, I recovered myself, and began to call myself a thousand fools, and tell

myself that he that was afraid to see the devil was not fit to live twenty years on an island alone, and that I durst believe there was nothing in this cave that was more frightful than myself: upon this, plucking up my courage, I took up a large firebrand and in I rushed again with the stick flaming in my hand . . . and by the light of the firebrand, holding it a little over my head, I saw lying on the ground a most monstrous, frightful old he-goat, just making his will, as we say, gasping for life, and dying, indeed, of mere old age."

Another impressive incident which rouses him in his long solitude, is the never-to-be-forgotten discovery of the foot marks on the sand.

"It happened one day about noon, going towards my boat, I was exceedingly surprised at the print of a man's naked foot on the shore, which was very plain to be seen on the sand. I stood like one thunderstruck or as if I had seen an apparition. I listened, I looked round me. I could hear nothing or see anything. I went up to a rising ground to look further up the shore and down the shore, but it was all one, I could see no other impression but that one."

The rescue of Friday and his transformation from a naked savage to be the factotum and disciple of the Autocrat of the Island, is a piece of history as familiar, and as fondly believed in, as King Alfred and the cakes; and yet, in spite of the verisimilitude imparted by minute attention to detail, a certain unreality makes itself constantly apparent. It is obvious that the story is merely a peg on which to hang certain ideas,

and that the author's real anxiety is to inculcate certain moral precepts. Man Friday would come out badly under scientific investigation. His baby language, which then passed current as the correct phraseology of the nigger, whether red, yellow, black, or brown, is a language unknown to the philologist. Common sense tells us that the gentle savage, our childhood's friend, is only a puppet, an uncivilized Sunday scholar set up on a pedestal to give his preceptor the opportunity of airing the fine moral sentiments which could hardly be appreciated by the cats or the parrot. Poor Friday, whose ideas probably did not rise above warmth or food, is represented as asking and having explained to him the most abstruse theological questions. Crusoe elicited from his faithful companion a summary of his beliefs, which consisted chiefly in the conception of a powerful personality, one "Old Benemucke" that lived beyond all . . . was old, much older than the sea or land, and the moon or the stars. All things said "O" (that is, prayed) to him, and to him went all who died, even those that were eaten.

I endeavoured, says Crusoe, to clear up this fraud to my man Friday, and told him that the pretence of their old men going up to the mountains to say "O" to their god Benemucke was a cheat, and their bringing word from thence what he said was a fraud; that if they met with any or spoke to any one there it must be with an evil spirit, and then I entered into a long discourse with him about the Devil. . . .

After this I had been telling him how the Devil was God's enemy in the heart of men and used all his malice and skill to defeat the good designs of Providence and to ruin the kingdom of Christ in this world and the like. "Well," says Friday, "but you say God is so strong, so great, is he not much strong, much might, as the Devil. . . . If God much might, much strong as the Devil, why God not kill the Devil so make him no more do wicked."

Alas! poor Friday, these questions of sin, of pain, of punishment, have puzzled wiser heads than thine, and while our half-chilled planet rushes madly through boundless space, the answer remains hidden in the womb of the Infinite.

For a considerable period Friday enjoyed his master's undivided attention. Presumably, he obtained complete knowledge of the English language; he certainly had ample opportunities for acquiring information on many subjects. Then a very exciting incident broke the monotony of their laborious days and added two new inhabitants to the island kingdom. A bearded Spaniard and an ancient savage, Friday's father, were saved from a horrible fate by the courage of Crusoe and the devotion of Friday. Crusoe having ascertained from the former that a small company of his compatriots were in danger of falling into the same predicament, despatched to their rescue his two newly-acquired subjects.

While they were absent on this expedition an important development followed in the arrival of an English vessel, whose mutinous sailors

PORTRAIT OF ROBINSON CRUSOE.

From the first edition (1719) in the British Museum.

landed with the intention of deserting their captain, mate, and passengers. With the help of Crusoe the English captain regained possession of his ship, and announced to the Solitary that he was now in a position to restore him to his native land, and at the same time producing a bottle from his pocket, gave his friend a dram to counteract the effect of so sudden and startling a piece of news. On 19th December, 1656, Crusoe, with his great goatskin cap, his umbrella, a parrot, and his man Friday, embarked for Lisbon, leaving behind him on the island the three ringleaders of the mutineers, with instructions that the Spaniard should occupy the position of governor.

Unwilling to spend any longer time on the treacherous element, from Lisbon, Crusoe, with two servants and a party of merchants, made their way across the Pyrenees in deep snow, and had alarming encounters with wolves and a bear, on which latter occasion Friday greatly distinguished himself. They arrived in England to find that Crusoe's parents and brothers were dead; two sisters and two of his brother's children alone remained.

The friendly widow to whom he had intrusted his little property had been a faithful guardian; an incident used by Defoe in "Captain Singleton," and interesting as showing the prevailing preference for hoarding in a stocking rather than making an investment in public funds.

A noticeable peculiarity, one characteristic of Defoe, is the fact that, with the exception of

Friday, the persons who come upon the stage are abstractions, not individuals; the Spaniard, Friday's father, the English captain, mate, and passengers, all are nameless. Among his animal companions, the first parrot is merely "Pol." The dog grows old and dies, the cats run wild and propagate their species, and it is never stated by what name Crusoe summoned them to his side. No real lover of animals would have been guilty of such an omission; but Defoe, a born cockney, secret messenger, and haunter of inns and coffee-houses had never perhaps enjoyed the society of an animal companion of his very own.

Crusoe's Further Adventures

Crusoe's attempt to lead a domestic life in his native land was destined to failure; and on the death of the nameless wife (married soon after his return), he cast off parental responsibility, left his children to the care of the faithful widow, and set out in his nephew's ship in search of further adventures by land and sea. He was not disappointed in his quest, and it was only after experiencing a whole series of exciting incidents that he arrived at his destination, and was warmly greeted by his friend and double, the deputy-governor of the island.

The adventurer was now confronted with a new problem of existence; he has no longer to struggle for bare subsistence, to fell his trees and build his boat with his own hands. He has

taken possession of a kingdom and colonized it; he now has to form rules for the guidance of his subjects, but must first learn from his deputy how affairs have been proceeding in his absence. The Spaniard informs him

that the "reprobate Englishmen" would do nothing but ramble about the Island, shoot parrots and catch tortoises, and when they came home at night the Spaniards provided supper for them.

When, after a quarrel with the Spaniards, the Englishmen were reduced to the painful necessity not only of growing but of cooking their own vegetables, they promptly made a freebooting expedition to the main land and brought back three young men to be hewers of wood and carriers of water, and five women to be wives and slaves. The allotting of these wives is thus humorously narrated.

The governor, who found that the having women among them would presently be attended with some inconvenience, and might occasion some strife and perhaps blood, asked the three men what they intended to do with these women, and how they intended to use them, whether as servants or as women. One of the Englishmen answered very boldly and readily that they would use them as both. To which the governor said, "I am not going to restrain you from it . . . yet it is reasonable that while you stay here the women any of you take would be maintained by the man who takes her, and should be his wife. I mean," says he, "while he continue here, and that none else should have anything to do with her." The Englishmen then asked the Spaniards whether

they designed to take any of them, but everyone answered no. . . . On the other hand, to be short, the five Englishmen took everyone a wife . . . and that two of them might not pitch on the same woman, especially seeing two or three of them were without comparison more agreeable than the others . . . they set the five women by themselves in one of the huts and they all went into the other hut and drew lots among them who should choose the first. He that drew to choose first, went by himself to the hut where the poor naked creatures were, and fetched out her he chose.

And it is worth recording that he who chose first took her that was reckoned the homeliest and oldest of the five . . . and she proved the best wife in the parcel . . . whereas the two honest fellows came off the worst.

Love, as we understand it, played no part in Crusoe's scheme of existence, the mutual attraction of the sexes still less. No romantic episodes illuminate the sombre tones of Defoe's pictorial writing. Not one fair damsel owed her safety and happiness to this doughty but prosaic hero, with the exception of a servant-maid dying of starvation on a water-logged ship, who was given in marriage to the "Jack of all trades." Five Portuguese ladies were eventually introduced into the settlement as wives for some of the Spaniards. "The others," Crusoe naïvely remarks, "did not want as they had wives already at home" (that is, presumably in Spain, to which they had no intention of returning). To these twelve immaculate grass-widowers were added a body of something like forty savages, all of whom

accepted without protest a life of enforced celibacy. Crusoe's island was like a monastery or a man-of-war; had the feminine element been entirely excluded this would not have been so surprising, as it is, this picture of an artificial Eden, with sixty sons of Adam and eleven daughters of Eve, detracts somewhat from the verisimilitude of his narrative, though the absence of the serpent who, if there, would certainly have been chronicled, may perhaps be taken into account.

Defoe's liberal attitude to the various parties in the Church is shown in his account of these island weddings. Crusoe is a staunch Protestant of the Nonconformist type, who refers slightingly to the "Popish Prayer Books," which form part of his library, yet he imported into the island a Roman Catholic priest, to whom he granted permission to convert the savages to his own form of belief. When, however, the latter asks that Friday may be given to him as an interpreter, Crusoe refuses on the ground that this faithful servant, having been bred a Protestant, would never believe his master to be a heretic, and that any confusion produced in his mind might turn him back to idolatry. For the benefit of those about to be married, the priest is desired to conceal his real standing and pass himself off as a minister of the Anglican Church. Was such a subterfuge as this excusable, even from prudential motives? It would certainly not be regarded with favour in clerical circles, but Defoe, before all things eminently practical, does

not fail to put on record that the signing of the register before witnesses, the really legal part of the ceremony, was duly observed.

It is difficult to discover by what occult process the heathen women were discovered to be fitting recipients for Holy Baptism, but Will Atkins, the most reprobate of the reprobate flock, who turned out to be the son of a Protestant clergyman, suddenly called to mind the religious instructions of his youth, and favoured the eavesdroppers (Crusoe and the Spaniard) with an edifying discourse intended for the conversion of his humble, little, savage wife. Will Atkins, it may be observed, was always the black sheep until, in a time of danger, he became the leader of the little army, after which time he was a reformed character. Defoe, though obtuse and one-sided in many important matters, had nevertheless a profound knowledge of mankind.

After bidding a last farewell to the island and its now numerous inhabitants, Crusoe, still in his nephew's ship, made a voyage to the East Indies, then to Brazil, and from thence to the Cape of Good Hope, and after touching at Madagascar reached the Bay of Bengal.

The crew wearied, as he himself related, by his continual preaching, insisted on the prosy old martinet being left behind. As no homeward bound English ship was to be found (in those days of sailing-ships the time of traffic was governed by the east and west monsoons), he made a little trip in the Malay Archipelago and

very nearly got hanged for a pirate. He travelled through China and visited Pekin.

The interest of this part of the story, resting principally on the fact that Defoe, in his narration, probably embodied all that was then known about a place which has occupied so important a position in modern history. He left Pekin in the beginning of February, and crossing Tartary reaches Russian territory on 13th April, where he perpetrates the final and most impressive incident of his chequered career. In true missionary spirit, quite regardless of the probable consequences of plunging two nations into unnecessary war, the undaunted Crusoe, with the assistance of a canny Scot merchant, as intolerant and over-zealous as himself, blew up the popular idol with a mixture of tar, aqua-vitae, gunpowder, and other combustible materials. In the lurid light of this explosion, Crusoe, like the Devil in whom he takes such peculiar interest, makes his exit from the stage.

THE SERIOUS REFLECTIONS OF ROBINSON CRUSOE

THERE are two ways of reading "Robinson Crusoe." The schoolboy, thrilling with delight over the adventures, swallows down with a grimace the moral discourses which lie concealed like gray powders in jam. An older reader may find those same discourses the most interesting part of the story. For Robinson Crusoe, like Hamlet, and the Egoist, is a philosophical treatise, and unless already very familiar, can by no means be taken up lightly to while away a sleepy half hour. In the "Serious Reflections" all pretence at a story has been abandoned, it is avowedly a series of homilies, intended, as the author tells us, to offer an explanation and key to the preceding volumes. The title, no less than the form of the contents, will prevent it from ever becoming popular, and few people are aware of its real merits. The three hundred and forty closely printed pages are full of entertaining and instructive anecdotes; the method of presenting the subjects is so original, the phraseology in which they are conveyed so admirably fitting to

the theme, that an attempt to reproduce the same ideas in any language save that of the author is like bestowing the broken fragments of an antique mosaic on a person anxious to learn something of the manner and technique of the artist. Defoe, as was his wont, struck at once at the root of the matter, and in the opening words of the preface makes believe to take the reader into his confidence:

As the design of everything is said to be first in the intention, I come now to acknowledge to my Reader that the present work is not merely the product of the two first volumes, but the two first volumes may rather be called the product of this. The fable is always made for the moral not the moral for the fable.

The author then, having explained that envious and evil disposed persons have objected to these same volumes, declaring the story to be an untrue one, thus continues:

I, Robinson Crusoe, being at this time in perfect and sound memory (THANKS BE TO GOD), do hereby declare their objection is an invention scandalous in design, and false in fact, and do affirm that the story, though allegorical, is also historical. Further that there is a man alive, and well known too, the actions of whose life are the just subject of these volumes, and to whom all, or most part of the story directly alludes; this may be depended upon for truth, and to this I set my name. The famous history of Don Quixote, a work which thousands read with pleasure to one who understands the meaning of it, was an emblematic history of, and

just satire upon, the Duke of Medina Sidonia, a person very remarkable at the time in Spain. To those who knew the origin, all the figures were lively, and easily discovered themselves, and they are also here, and the images were just; and therefore when a malicious, but foolish writer, in the abundance of his gall spoke of the Quixotism of Robinson Crusoe he showed evidently that he knew nothing of what he said; and perhaps will be a little startled when I tell him that what he meant for a satire was the greatest of panegyrics. . . . Thus the frights and fancies which succeeded the stories of the print of a man's foot, and surprise of the old goat and the thing rolling on my bed, and my jumping out in a fright, are all historical and real stories as likewise the dream of my being taken by messengers, being arrested by officers, the manner of my being driven on shore by the surge of the sea, the ship on fire, the description of starving, the story of the man Friday and many more most material passages observed here, and on which any religious reflections are made, are all historical and true in fact. It is more real that I had a parrot, and taught it to call me by name. . . . The story of the bear in the tree, the fight with wolves in the snow is likewise matter of real history; and in a word the Adventures of Robinson Crusoe are one whole scheme of a real life of eight and twenty years, spent in the most wandering, desolate, and afflicting circumstances that ever man went through, . . . in a word, there is not a circumstance in the imaginary story but has its just allusion to a real story, and chimes, part for part, and step for step, with the inimitable life of Robinson Crusoe.

The above remarkable statements offer matter for serious consideration. Can they be regarded as the origin of the widely spread assertion that

the story of "Robinson Crusoe" was an allegory, and that under the thinly veiled fiction of a shipwrecked mariner on a desert island is described the sensations of a man who, unjustly imprisoned, passes through the phases of rebellion, impenitence, repentance, and Christian resignation, to philosophical content? Various pieces of evidence have been brought forward in support of this argument, such as the frequent use of the word "reprieve," most commonly employed only in connection with persons who have been condemned to suffer the extreme penalty of the law; also his constant reference to the overwhelming effect of sudden joy, almost as fatal in its result as sudden grief, suggest a personal experience of a similar kind, either in his own person, or witnessed by him during his prison life.

Defoe's predilection for speaking in paradox is shown by his political pamphlets; but he had a more reprehensible habit of deliberately throwing dust into the eyes of his readers. A flagrant example which occurs in the preface of one of his apparition stories was given in another chapter, but in endeavouring to form an unbiased opinion as to the veracity of the preceding paragraph, let it at least be conceded that the story may be a mixture of truth and fiction closely interwoven into so tangled a web that it cannot be unravelled even by the utmost ingenuity.

A lie that is all a lie may be met and fought with outright,
But a lie that is part a truth is a harder matter to fight.

The anecdotes possibly were true, the outline of the story may have been an allegory of Defoe's own life, but the connection of the two seems inexplicable unless it is assumed that "Robinson Crusoe" is another version of "The Pilgrim's Progress," and that the bears, the lions, the shipwrecks, and the savages, are mere figures of speech and symbolize the trials and temptations which are encountered by every man at some time or other during his journey through life.

Solitude, which is the "leitmotif" of the whole story, is the theme of the first of the seven sections into which the book is divided, and, from its exceeding importance, may be with advantage reserved for the climax. In the second section, on "Honesty," the author points out a fact which can hardly have escaped notice, viz., the fair treatment which Crusoe met with in all his business transactions. Defoe was distinguished by his commercial integrity, and therefore paints others in the light of his own virtue. So when discoursing on different kinds of honesty he gives as an example the widow to whom Crusoe intrusted a hundred guineas, the fruit of his first adventure, and who had, though suffering the pangs of poverty, preserved intact the little horde committed to her keeping. He goes on to tell of the Portuguese captain who rescued Crusoe and Xury on the coast of Africa, and paid generously for the boat and other possessions which he might have taken by force, or laid claim to as an indemnity for his own services. He reminds the reader of the Brazilian planter who was Cru-

soe's partner, of the two merchants and their sons who had care of his property over a period of nearly thirty years, though they must have given up all hope that the owner would ever return. Even the abbot, to whom a third part of the annual income had been allotted for charitable purposes, returned all the money in his possession with an apology for not being in a position to refund that which had already been devoted to good works; only the king, that is, government, made no restitution.

Defoe's own belief in the personality of the Devil, which is the subject of the next section, is illustrated by the following anecdote:

It was one night, after having seen odd curious appearances in the air of no great significance, that coming home, and being in bed but not asleep, I felt a pain in one of my feet; after which it came to a sort of numbness in my foot, which a little surprised me; and after that a kind of tingling in my blood, as it had been some distemper running up my leg. On a sudden, I felt, as it were something alive lie upon me, as if it had been a dog lying upon my bed, from my knee downwards, about half way my leg, and immediately after I felt it heavier, and felt it as plain roll itself upon me, upwards upon my thigh—for I lay on one side; I say, as if it had been a creature lying upon me with all his weight, and turning his body upon me. It was so lively and sensible to me, and I remember it so perfectly well, though it is now many years ago, that my blood chills and flutters about my heart at the very writing it. I immediately flung myself out of my bed, and flew to my musquet, which stood always ready at my hand, and naked as I was, laid about me upon

the bed, in the dark, and everywhere else that I could think of where anyone could stand or lie, but could find nothing. "Lord deliver me from an evil spirit," said I, "what can this be?" and being tired with groping about and having broken two or three of my earthern pots, with making blows here and there to no purpose, I went to light my candle, for my lamp which I used to burn in the night, had not been lighted, or had gone out. When I lighted the candle I could easily see that there was no living creature in the place with me, but the poor parrot, which was wakened and frightened, and cried out "Hold your tongue," and "What's the matter with you." Which words he had learnt from me from my frequent saying so to him, when he used to make his ordinary wild noises and screaming, that I did not like. The more I was satisfied that there was nothing in the room, at least to be seen, the more another concern came upon me. "Lord," says I aloud, "this is the Devil." "Hold your tongue," says Pol.

Unable for a long time to explain to his satisfaction the phenomena evidently due to physical causes:

"I went about," he says, "with a melancholy heavy heart fully satisfied that the Devil had been in my room and lay on my bed. Sometimes I would try to argue myself a little out of it, by asking myself whether it was reasonable to imagine that the Devil had nothing else to do but to come thither and only lie down upon me, and go away about his business, and not say one word to me. What end could it answer? And whether I thought the Devil was really busied about such trifles? Or whether he had not employment enough of a higher nature, so that such a thing as this could be worth his while?

But still then I was answered by my own thought returning thus, what could it be? Or if it was not the Devil, what was it? This I could not answer, by any means at all, so I still sunk under the belief that it was the Devil, and nothing but the Devil. . . . I scarce heard the least noise, near, or far off, but I started and expected to see a Devil, and I scarce went twenty yards together, by night or by day, without looking behind me. Sometimes indeed I would take a little heart and would say, 'Well, let it be the Devil if it will, God is master of the Devil, and he can do me no hurt; unless he is permitted: he can be nowhere but he that made him is there too.' And as I said afterwards, when frightened by the old goat in the cave, 'He is not fit to live alone in such an island for twenty years that would be afraid to see the Devil.'"

From the "Devil" to "Dreams" is a natural transition in a person of Defoe's temperament. "Dreams," he says, "are dangerous," and he searches the Scriptures for examples of dreams. From these he proceeds to Astronomy, on which subject he appears to hold the same views as a certain modern writer, viz.: that no planet in its present condition would be a fit habitation for a normally constructed human being. Returning to his favourite subject, the Devil and his works, he selects for castigation poor unhappy Eve, on whom, in the "Political History of the Devil," he had passed so scathing a verdict:

What was the method chosen by the Devil to seduce mankind? Satan fastened on poor ridiculous mother Eve, made presently a true judgment of her temper and capacity, took her by the right method

and soothing her vanity which is to this day the softest place in the head of the sex, wheedled her out of her senses by praising her beauty and promising to make her a Goddess.

"Oracles" he refers to as being works of the Devil, ingenious devices to lure men to destruction.

From "Oracles" he passes on to "Premonitions," of which he gives a particularly poor and pointless example, and a story of the class of the Wesley hauntings, where the loud rappings of a hammer, supposed to be the work of the Devil, are eventually traced to a monkey. His explanation of the folly of believing such manifestations is curious:

> If these things were not frequently detected it would be a great scandal upon the Devil, that he had nothing to employ himself upon more significant than rapping all night with a hammer to frighten and disturb the neighbours, making noises, putting out candles, and the like. When we come into the invisible state of which we now know so little, we shall be easily convinced that the Devil is otherwise employed, and has business of more importance on his hands.

"The Immorality of Conversation and of Vulgar Errors of Behaviour," furnish him with a discourse divided into seven parts, and the "Present State of Religion" gives the opportunity for a dialogue between Crusoe and an ancient gentlewoman on "The principle business of mankind."

"On listening to the Voice of Providence" is a variation of his favourite theme that there is no such thing as good and evil fortune, but that all things are pre-arranged by an overruling providence. "The Proportion between the Christian and Pagan World" reads like a missionary report; but one passage is interesting as an illustration of that broadmindedness on matters theological which brought upon Defoe the enmity of all parties in the Church.

"I have nothing to do," he says, "with the distinctions of Christians: I hope none will object against calling the Roman Church a Christian Church in this respect, and the professors of the Popish Church Christian, neither do I scruple to call the Greek Church Christian, though in some places so blended with superstition and barbarous customs."

Very remarkable are the opening words of "The Vision of the Angelic World."

They must be much taken up with the satisfaction of what they are already, that never spare their thoughts upon the subject of what they shall be. The locality of heaven and hell is no part of my search; there is doubtless a place reserved for the reception of our souls after death; as there is a state of being for material substances, so there must be a place, if we are to be, we must have a Where.

The last pages of "An Angelic Vision" are devoted to an anecdote concerning a young University man, the president of an Atheistic

Club, whose conversion is brought about by the coincidence of having had repeated to him twice in the same afternoon the following lines:

> But if it should fall out, as who can tell,
> That there MAY BE A GOD, a heaven, a hell,
> Had I not best consider well, for fear
> 'Twould be too late when my mistake appear.

If we believe, as indeed seems probable, that Defoe is the hero of his own "Romance of Solitude," his reflections on that subject will naturally possess peculiar interest.

"I must have made very little use," he says, "of my solitary wandering years, if, after such a scene of wonders as my life may be justly called, I had nothing to say and had made no observations which might be useful and instructive as well as pleasant and diverting to those who are to come after me. . . . The world I say is nothing to us, but as it is more or less to our relish, all reflection is carried home and our dear self is in one respect the end of living. . . . What are the sorrows of other men to us? and what their joys? Something we may indeed be touched by the power of sympathy and a secret turn of the affections; but all the solid reflection is devoted to ourselves. . . . Our meditations are all solitude in perfection, our passions are all exercised in retirement, we love, we hate, we covet, we enjoy all in privacy and solitude. . . .

"What then is the silence of life? and how is it afflicting, while a man hears the voice of his soul to speak to God and himself? That man can never want conversation who is company to himself; and he that cannot converse profitably with himself is worth no conversation at all. . . . So I can affirm

that I enjoy much more solitude in the middle of the greatest collection of mankind in the world, I mean London, while I am writing this, than ever I can say I enjoyed in eight and twenty years' confinement in a desert island."

The anecdote which may have given rise to the tradition of Defoe's own silence, referred to in connection with "The History of Dikory Cronke," is a striking one:

I have heard of a man, that upon some extraordinary disgust which he took to the unsuitable conversation of some of his nearest relations, whose society he could not avoid, suddenly resolved never to speak any more: he kept his resolution most rigorously many years; not all the tears and entreaties of his friends, no not of his wife and children, could prevail with him to break his silence. . . . His wife could not bear it, and after endeavouring, by all ways possible, to alter his rigid silence, went first away from him, and afterwards away from herself, becoming melancholy and distracted. His children separated some one way and some another, was only one daughter, who loved her father above the rest kept with him, tended him, talked to him by signs, and lived almost dumb like her father, near twenty-nine years with him; till being very sick and in a high fever, delirious as we call it, he broke his silence, not knowing when he did it, and spoke though wildly at first.

Yet this man did not lead a silent life with himself, he read continually and was often heard to pray to God in his solitude very audibly and with great fervour. . . . Let no man plead that he wants retirement; that he loves solitude but cannot enjoy it, because of the embarrassment of the world; it is all

delusion, if he loves it, if he desire it, he may have it, when, where, and as often as he pleases.

The story of "Robinson Crusoe," which has been compared with the "Odyssey," finds another counterpart in Old World romance, in that of Philoctetes, who, like Selkirk, was deliberately deserted by his comrades and condemned to dwell alone on that "Sea-inclosed land Lemnos, untrodden, and no home of men."

It is not originality of thought but of presentation which drew from Dr. Johnson the exclamation: "Was there ever any other story by mere man than this which was wished longer by the reader?" The idea of noble self-sufficiency is found in some lines by Dyer:

> My mind to me a kingdom is,
> Such present joys therein I find
> That it excels all other bliss
> That earth affords. . . .

Freedom of thought, rising above the material disadvantages of bodily confinement, inspired the cavalier poet, Richard Lovelace, when he sang:

> Stone walls do not a prison make,
> Nor iron bars a cage;
> Minds innocent and quiet take
> This for a hermitage.
>
> If I have freedom in my love,
> And in my soul am free,
> Angels alone that soar above
> Enjoy such liberty.

To his enemies Defoe appeared as a spy, hypocrite, and turncoat, but time, that clears away the mists of prejudice, enables us to pass a more lenient judgement. He is not an attractive personality, for him no glamour of romance sheds a lustre over noble faults and heroic sins. He is the product of a period when Vice was squalid and Virtue hypocritical, yet if into the story of Crusoe we read the personality of Defoe it will surely be conceded that "The Strange Adventures" could only have been written by a man whose life was, for the most part, passed in independence of thought, and who was accustomed to great reverses, which he met with courage and inexhaustible resource. He must have believed in the "Divinity that shapes our ends," for he consulted his Bible in moments of doubt, and was not afraid to find himself alone with Nature and God. The conduct of Philoctetes, when he wept and bewailed his misfortune, appears contemptible to a generation with whom self-control is a matter of habit. The language of Crusoe savours of hypocrisy to those who regard soul revelations as indiscreet, if not actually indelicate, and preserve the utmost reticence on the subject of their personal beliefs. The details of the story provide infinite matter for ridicule, discrepancies of statement are glaring and apparent; yet, in spite of obvious blemishes, "Robinson Crusoe" has abiding merit and will continue to find interested readers. For while, in a special sense, it is regarded as the autobiography of an individual, it has also a

wider significance in its application to the race. There can be no limit to our sympathy with the shipwrecked mariner in his loneliness, since we, too, share his griefs. As alone we came into this world, so in moments of danger, and when the hand of fate lies heavy on us, those we love best are powerless to aid us; as the years go by, their pace increasing rapidly when the meridian is passed, solitude in the crowd is no longer a passing episode, and the friends whom we love, the relations whom we have known since infancy, drop away from our side. The longer our pilgrimage the greater the need for self-sustainment, and in the solemn moment of our release we shall find ourselves alone with Nature and God.

In the sleepy little town of King's Lynn, once an important seaport, there lived during the last two centuries a family called Cruso, whose memorial slabs lie scattered on the floor of the beautiful Church of St. Nicholas. They were sober, well-to-do citizens, and not ashamed of their callings, for after each name is inscribed in brackets, Mercer, Surgeon, or Upholder (a local name for undertaker). An aged lady, the last of her race, has kindly furnished the following particulars: "My ancestor was a Huguenot who came from Flanders and settled at Norwich. I have always understood that Defoe took the name of Crusoe from our family tombstones.[1]

[1] Cruzo as a surname occurs in Holy Cross, Canterbury, as early as 1659. Defo occurs in 1693 and Friday is

My father's name was Robinson, my brother's too."

found in the register of the parish of St. Dunstan, Canterbury. Creuso as a surname was to be met with at Fotheringay in 1573. The favourite surname of the Crusos of Lynn was Francis, and the name Robinson does not occur on the tombstone before 1794.

HIS STYLE

AMONG the many admirers of "Robinson Crusoe," how many are aware what a debt of gratitude is owing to the author, whose "Review," published in the midst of so much anxiety and danger, served as a model for the far better known "Spectator" and "Tatler." Defoe's "introductory letter" was the prototype of our leading article; he was the promoter, if not the inventor, of that society journal which is the staple literature of a large portion of the community; he was an adept at puffing new books, using this method chiefly for attracting attention to his own writings; and as a special correspondent he was a worthy progenitor of his modern representatives. He was the first to furnish his readers with personal interviews, with realistic details of criminals, accidents, and adventures by land and sea. Between 1721 and 1722 he wrote accounts of a celebrated felon, Cartouch, the Highland rogue (Rob Roy), and Jonathan Wild. When Jack Sheppard met his well-deserved fate, Defoe, at the foot of the gallows, received from his hands a packet, whose contents, a confession and copy of verses, presumably written by this disguised

ENGRAVED PORTRAIT OF DEFOE.

Origin unknown.

friend, excited general interest as the authentic composition of the popular highwayman.

But not only "as the supreme journalist of the age does Defoe hold an assured place among English writers either of History or Fiction. His standard and his practice, his ways and words, show us English affairs as in a mirror"; few writers are so intensely realistic; his style is vivid, concise, and always admirably adapted to the various subjects which occupied his busy pen. No man was ever more successful in laying hold of, and presenting in an attractive form, the passing topics of the hour; he was no prophet, but he caught ideas, as it were, in the air and crystallized them for presentation before the public.

Even now, when the subjects of Defoe's political tracts have ceased to interest the general reader, the language in which he conveys his sentiments can hardly fail to amuse them. "The Shortest Way with Dissenters" is the most amazing piece of audacity, especially when taking into consideration the time at which it was written, when religious and political feeling ran high, and condign punishment awaited the scribbler who made himself objectionable to the higher powers. Such tracts as "An Answer to a Question which nobody thinks of, What if the Queen should die?" and "What if the Pretender should come?" are brilliant, bewildering, paradoxical, and yet perfectly logical pieces of reasoning.

In "The Consolidator: or, Memoirs of Sun-

dry Transactions from the World to the Moon,' a satirical essay in the style rendered familiar by Swift's "Voyage to Laputa," he sets before his readers a well-considered survey of political events in England during the reigns of William and Anne. The Consolidator is the English Parliament, a heavy cumbrous flying-machine; the feathers, which promote and control its movements, are the members of Parliament, elected as representatives of the people; and the Crolians and Solurnians who disturb the calm of the lunar atmosphere, are the rival parties of High Church and Dissent.

A minor peculiarity of this author's writing, but one that helps to give a marked individuality to his style, is the unusual spelling or meaning that he gives to certain common words: his parrot is "Pol" with one "l"; he says "chark" for charcoal, and uses "amuse" in the sense of "to deceive," as when he speaks of "amusing the Tory party." "Reprieve" also, which is a legal term, was employed by him about a man who was shipwrecked, and not at that time in any way concerned with human justice.

"He was a powerful, though unpolished, satirist; was master of an admirable prose style"; and Swift, who never failed to lash Defoe with stinging criticism, yet borrowed from his despised contemporary suggestions which he made use of, not only as already stated in "Gulliver's Travels," but also in that infamous pamphlet, "The Modest Proposal." Though Defoe's satires, whether political or otherwise, are more enter-

taining than his fiction, yet it is not surprising that the world in general, like Charles Lamb, are in darkness as to the larger number of his writings, nor that they never come across such a work as "The Review," since there is only one complete copy, and that is in private hands.

"Defoe's Biography," by Walter Wilson, enlightened Lamb on many points on which he had till then been in ignorance, and in writing to the latter, to acknowledge the receipt of the volumes, he exclaims enthusiastically: "He was always my darling—I shall always feel happy in having my name go down anyhow with Defoe's."

Among Lamb's "Critical Essays," besides that on Secondary Novels, is another entitled, "The Good Clerk: a Character with some Account of the Complete English Tradesman," of which he writes: "The hundreds of anecdotes, dialogues (in Defoe's liveliest manner), interspersed, all tending to the same amiable purpose, namely, the sacrificing of every honest emotion of the soul, to what he calls the main chance—if you read it in an ironical sense, and as a piece of covered satire—makes it one of the most amusing books Defoe writ." In a letter to Wilson, written 1829, he again expresses his views: "The narrative manner of Defoe has a naturalness about it beyond that of any other novel or romance writer. His fictions have all the air of true stories. To this the extreme homeliness of their style mainly contributes. The narrators everywhere are chosen from low life, or have had their origin in it; therefore,

they tell their own tales as persons in their degree are observed to do, with infinite repetition, an over-acted exactness. Hence the emphatic sentences marked in the good old italic type; hence, too, the frequent interposition of the reminding old colloquial parenthesis, 'I say,' 'mind,' and the like, which made an ingenious critic observe that his works of this kind were capital reading for the kitchen. And, in truth, the heroes and heroines of Defoe can never again hope to be popular with a much higher class of readers than that of the servant, maid, and the sailor. Yet," he continues, "we would not hesitate to say, that in no other book of fiction where the lives of such characters are described, is guilt and delinquency made less seductive, or the suffering made more closely to follow the commission, or the penitence more earnest or more bleeding, or the intervening flashes of religious visitation upon the rude and uninstructed soul more meltingly and more fearfully painted."

This letter to Wilson was written just a century later than Defoe's great outpouring of romance, when literature of the moral and instructive kind had still a certain vogue. But "the old order changeth, giving place to new," was seldom more apparent than in the alteration of literary taste, during the years that have elapsed since Lamb passed the foregoing verdict. Who, at the present time, can sympathize with hypocritical penitence the cries of "Mea culpa," the tearing of hair and raiment by Defoe's

criminals, whose regret is not caused by their sins but by prospective punishment, only awakes contemptuous pity. Edifying deathbed repentances of the old-fashioned type arouse no responsive emotion in an age when men of blameless lives and brilliant intellects meet their end unflinchingly with the avowal on their lips that they can formulate no belief as to a future state whether for good or for evil.

Defoe's first piece of descriptive writing, combining truth with fiction, was his history of a violent storm, which swept across England in November, 1703. So graphic is the account of its terrible results, so minute the detail of the attending circumstances, that but for the well-attested fact that he was actually locked up in Newgate at the time, it would be impossible to doubt that he saw the events which he describes.

Another example of word-painting, in the author's best manner, is that remarkable account of a volcanic eruption on the island of St. Vincent, which now almost takes rank as a scientific prophecy with Swift's two moons of Mars. The writer had never seen a volcano, yet his account of the imaginary catastrophe will bear comparison with the recent records of the great eruption of Mont Pelée in Martinique, when Defoe's fancy picture of a West Indian island blown into the air became a grim and terrible reality.

Such, then, are the qualifications which have led Lamb, Hazlitt, Forster, Leslie Stephen, and other distinguished critics, to devote so much

attention to this half-forgotten author. "To him," says the last-named author, "was given a tongue to which no one could listen without believing every word he uttered; he had the most marvellous power ever known of giving verisimilitude to his fiction, or, in other words, he had the most amazing talent on record for telling lies."

If Defoe is to be stigmatized with so opprobrious a title, let it at least be conceded that he was past master in this particular line. So well is his reputation established that in a bookseller's catalogue of to-day there appears as an advertisement the following extract from the pages of "The Quarterly Review": "If this work be genuine, it is undoubtedly, as it announces itself, the most interesting of those strange trials for witchcraft, so absorbing and sometimes so inexplicable, which occur at a certain period in almost every country of Europe. If it be a fiction, it is worthy—we can give it no higher praise—of Defoe. We have read nothing, for a long time, in fiction or history which has so completely riveted and absorbed our attention."

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